







**II A M E L.**





# HAMEL,

## THE OBEAH MAN.

— I apprehend and do attach thee  
For an abuser of the world, a practiser  
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.

OTHELLO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# HAMEL.

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## CHAPTER I.

— This affliction has a taste as sweet  
As any cordial comfort.

WINTER'S TALE.

THE day was fast drawing to a close; the sea breeze had died by that agreeable death for which philosophers so often sigh and sigh in vain—old age and exhaustion; the faculty, the excellence, of it enduring to the last; more temperate in its decline; and as the less passionate, so much the more regretted when it was gone. What would Jamaica be without it? As badly provided as the world is without philosophers;—not that by philosopher is meant a weigher of gases, or a writer of polemics, of books of political economy, or theological controversy, cheap tracts, such as 'Tom White' and 'Margaret Blue,' or books of any kind;—but by philosopher is intended one

who sees and knows, and by bearing teaches or rather encourages others to bear, the multiplied inconveniences, vexations, and tribulations, of this weary life, (with which Heaven knows it is most crammed,) making, in spite of *Candide*, the best of everything.

Mr Guthrie rode towards the rendezvous, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, having left his wife, as the Missionary had stated in his conversation with Michal, on a sick bed, and—as he apprehended—in a fatal condition. Yet his presence and services were of no avail with her, and seemed in fact to add only fuel to the fire which consumed her. He had received the tale communicated by the soubrette with some astonishment, wondering how he could have failed to detect the disguise of Fairfax, and—why in spite of the Quadroon's explanation on the subject, Fairfax should not have discovered himself. “The return he owed to the rascals who brought him from Cuba!—Yes, he was bound to let them get away; there was some delicacy in his not shocking my wife and daughter, after all this low business, and considering the antipathy she was taken to him—and that I had. Alas, alas! Self-interest! But no matter for that—I must do my duty by the poor boy; I must give him my advice as a man, my assistance as a magistrate; I must seat him in the hall of his ancestors. And for Joanna—

I suppose she will be twice as much in love with him as ever, since her mother has exacted her solemn promise not to marry him—and this romance in his character at present—his painted face, and his Spanish name, and his tossing robbers into the sea,—the girl will be downright crazy about him ;—and a letter written on a cambric pocket handkerchief, and that silly Michal whimpering all the while she read it ;—well, well, he is a brave lad.” The old man’s heart yearned towards him, the nearer he drew towards the spot where he expected to find the son of his friend ; his mind now reverting to past days, now looking to the future ; sometimes recalling the comfort and independence in which both families had been wont to live, then contemplating the broken society in which, with impaired fortunes and blighted hopes, they were now struggling ; and then imagining the horrors which, as *he* thought, must inevitably, soon or late, dissolve for ever the influence and authority of white men among a set (as he expected them to become) of fanatical and infuriated Blacks.

The sun was setting—(he sinks, in the Tropics, as if Phaeton always attempted to guide the steeds of Apollo)—and his long rays, shot from the ridges of the western mountains, gleamed on the giant shafts of the cotton-trees—(wands which would have been almost stout enough for

Milton's hero)—and on their long streamers, hanging motionless in the becalmed atmosphere. The distant sea was fast subsiding into repose—scarce a wave murmured; the crickets thought it time to go to bed, and the bat and the owl thought it was time to get up; a few beetles and cockroaches were in the same mood; but the lizards still scampered about the road, as Mr Guthrie came cantering on, now flashing their grey jackets in the sunbeams, now whisking their long tails into the shaded bushes, and into the chinks of the rocks. Fairfax was already at the sunken bridge, which is a sort of dam made in rather a muddy river-course, with bays and gravel to afford a safe passage through the water for mules and oxen, and the wains they draw; an arched bridge not suiting the taste of many of these Jamaica streams, which are apt to bury up such conveniences under a mountain of rubbish, before they choose another course to the ocean, perhaps half a mile distant from the old one. There had been a few bamboo poles suspended across for foot passengers; but the rain of the hurricane, swelling the river, had carried them away; so that now it had become necessary for Fairfax to walk through the water, or to remain on the eastern side. He chose the latter alternative, being as yet uncertain whether Mr Guthrie would attend to his request, and give him the meeting at this the appointed place.

Had he waded through the stream, he had hardly failed to encounter Roland, whose horse was not tied above a hundred yards from the bridge, and at about the distance of twenty yards from himself.

Mr Guthrie had been made acquainted with the violence which Roland had offered to Michal, though he was not aware of the result of Hamel's interference, as the Quadroon had not waited to see the Missionary grafted, or rather inarched (to use a horticultural phrase) on the trumpet-tree—a fit species of vegetable for the occasion. Some sable Ovid, in future ages, may tell of the metamorphosis of such a preacher into such a tree, and feign that its name was thus derived because Roland was a trumpeter, and the tree became as hollow as a trumpet, in consequence of this oracle, this spouter, being so incorporated.

Fairfax at length heard the clattering of the whey-faced horse; and looking anxiously down the glade, recognised the wall-eyes of the beast, and the squinting eyes and pinioned locks of the kind old planter. He in his turn espied the Mulatto Sebastian, who doffed his sombrero in token of recognition, waving it beside the streamlet where he stood. So anxious did the old man seem to come up with him, that he mended his pace as soon as he caught a glimpse of him, and without looking to the right or left, galloped



straight forward down the glade, dashed through the water, and leaping with youthful activity from his horse, took the young man in his arms, strained him as affectionately to his heart as if he had been the issue of his own body—his own, his sole, his long-lost, darling son. “ My child, my child, may every blessing be yours ! Welcome to the land of your fathers, to your own lands, to your inheritance, to my heart, to every heart that loves you ! ” (His lip quivered, and a tear or two forced their way from his eyes, in spite of his efforts to prevent them.) “ What is it, Fairfax ? What can I do for you ? I have left my poor wife dying, to come and meet you ; but where is your copper-coloured face ? You are as fair as ever, and look as handsome as if the grasp of sorrow had never wrung your heart.”

It may be supposed the young man was not unaffected by this ebullition of old Guthrie’s affectionate nature. He returned his embrace, and kissed his old sunburnt hand with the submissive idolatry of a fond and doting child ; but his heart was too full to speak. “ God’s blessing ! ” cried the old man again, “ that I may heal all your wounds, and soothe all your cares ! *Duras immittere curas*, of which my poor boy has had his share. Oh, Fairfax ! But they are all lies ; and we shall defeat the liars. I have told Fillbeer I

shall take your part, and we must turn him out ; but not to-night—it is too late—the sun is down ; and we must do all in open day.”

“ It is too late, sir,” replied Fairfax, wringing the old man’s hand, which he still grasped in his own. “ Nothing but your kindness could enable me to bear up against the calumnies that have been heaped upon me, and the oppressions that have almost overwhelmed me,—misfortunes indeed of all kinds ; but the worst is, that I have lost, by the pirates who took me into Cuba, my clothes and property.”

“ Tush—fiddlestick !” said the old man. “ I will equip you from my own wardrobe. Besides, your own costume, for the present, cannot well be bettered.”

“ And I have lost,” added Fairfax, “ a most important document—a power of attorney from Mr M’Grabbit in London, to supersede Mr Fillbeer here in the management of all his affairs.”

“ You astonish me,” said Mr Guthrie, opening his eyes to the widest. “ A power of attorney from M’Grabbit ! What ! did the hypocrite relent at last ?”

“ He relented from persisting in the wrong,” replied Fairfax : “ he found I was informed of everything relating to my rights and interests ; and Fillbeer is such an ass that he did not send the accounts, nor half the crops, to him. He was

very glad of an opportunity to be revenged on Fillbeer: he gave me a power of attorney to be in fact my own trustee for all the estates that are mortgaged, leaving it to my honour, as he said, to arrange all matters relating to Belmont as my father's son would wish himself to do."

"Very fine, indeed, M'Grabbit; no virtue like the virtue of necessity;—and this power of attorney you have lost?"

"Indeed I have. It was taken with my baggage and all my moveables, by a crew of pirates, who plundered our ship and burnt it."

"I wonder," said Mr Guthrie, "you escaped with your life."

"It was a wonder. That Negro Drybones—or, as we called him, Nimrod—belonged to my father; he knew me; it was he who managed to get our lives spared, on condition of a ransom from Jamaica; it was he who secreted me in Cuba, found me the plant which stained my hands and face—a secret I had from Hamel, one of my father's Negroes, a rebellious Coromantin whom he had bought at my intercession, when a boy, from another Coromantin his master."

"I know the man," said Mr Guthrie: "he is reckoned a professor of Obeah."

"This Drybones," continued Fairfax, "equipped me as you see, and got me a birth in the canoe which was destined to carry away your daughter

Joanna, to be the wife of a black man who was to set up for the crown of Jamaica, to be king of the island."

"There is no end to the extravagance of their notions now," said Mr Guthrie with a sigh. "We want to get hold of this king—this Combah, as he is called."

"It was perhaps a fortunate circumstance," continued Fairfax, "that I was taken into Cuba, and got a birth in the boat which was freighted with a set of cut-throats who were to attack your house. The storm disabled the boat; but they would have made a second attempt, if I had not run the canoe on the rocks, and fairly bundled the crew on shore or into the water."

"Alack, alack!" said the planter, musing over the circumstances he had heard: "so you have lost the power of attorney: that is the most serious loss of all."

"They left me nothing, sir," rejoined Fairfax, "but my shirt and trowsers, not even a hat:—yes, yes, they left me one thing—here it is—the picture of Joanna:" (taking it from his bosom:) "it was set round with pearls, which they took out: the rest they did not value, Drybones procured it for me."

The old man looked at the picture and then at Fairfax, and heaved a deep sigh. "Ah, my poor boy," said he—"but we'll talk of this tomorrow: we must go back to my house for to-night; Joanna

will be too happy to——Ah, there again, all wrong! God only knows what fancy has possessed my wife: but I believe she would encounter Beelzebub rather than see you: the mention of your name is to her what water is to a man raving with hydrophobia.”

“Alas,” said Fairfax, “she has but too much cause.”

“How!” cried the old man, with a start. “What is the cause? Do you know it!”

“I know it but too well,” replied the other: “I never knew it till today.”

“What the devil is it, then?” said Mr Guthrie. “Tell me quickly, I pray and beseech you: her aversion is beyond reason, it seems to know no bounds whatever.”

“It cannot: it would not, supposing she were not imposed on. But I can never tell you, sir: it is impossible. I could tell her she is deceived; but to no one else could I explain myself, and least of all to you:—and indeed I would, if I might take so great a liberty, advise you never to inquire about the cause of her aversion to me; only——”

“I tell you, my dear boy,” rejoined Mr Guthrie, “I hate all mystery, and care not a curse for the worst that I can hear; but I must know this bugaboo tale, be it what it may, except it involves your own character.”

“Oh, sir, not the least,” said Fairfax. “Mrs

Guthrie is deceived by the Missionary, Mr Roland."

"Gad's my life, I thought as much," replied the planter. "That rank old vermin attacked my Quadroon, Michal, here today in this very spot, and tried to rob her of your handkerchief, and would have succeeded but for the interference of a Negro who chanced to pass by, and threatened to cut his throat if he did not desist. He is always in some disgraceful scrape: I met him in the morning all over bruises and bumps, with a black eye. Ha! there is a horse neighing—who is coming?"

"I see no one," replied the young man.

The horse neighed again.

"This is not a place to turn out horses; let us cross the water; get up behind me," said Mr Guthrie: "Harlequin is not riotous; he will carry us through the river goodnaturedly."

The old gentleman mounted before; the young gentleman seated himself behind on the croup, hardly containing himself from laughter at his friend's funny tail, which stuck out so as to tickle his face in the passage of the streamlet. He slipped off as soon as they were on dry land; and walking forward a few paces, they beheld the sulky Spanish beast of the devout Roland.

## CHAPTER II.

“ Shew him up, sir? With all my heart, sir, up  
or down, all's one to me—”

GOOD-NATURED MAN.

“ *INSTAR montis equum*,” said the old gentleman ;  
“ here's Roland's Bucephalus ; and see—by my  
stars, the *divina Pallas*—tied to the trumpet-tree  
yonder ! Did any one ever see the like of this ?  
The horse is safe ; let us go to the rider. Is he  
alive or dead ?”

The sun had been set some minutes ; but there  
was a rosy sort of effulgence still glowing in the  
atmosphere, which illuminated every object with  
a mellow and yet perfect light ; and as Roland  
fronted the western sky, it gleamed with all its  
radiance upon his solemn and sullen features,  
rendered ridiculous by the impressions of the  
royal fists of Combah, as before related. His  
green shade had been wriggled from its position  
on his forehead, and hung from beneath his chin.

His hands were tied behind the tree so securely, that all his efforts to loosen them had effected nothing beyond giving him considerable farther annoyance. In fact, he was almost as secure as if he had really become incorporated with the tree, and had begun to take root.

Mr Guthrie, casting at him a look of commiseration and reproach, drew a knife from his pocket, and cut the bonds which held his throat, before a word was exchanged between the parties; the young man assisting at the same time to liberate his knees from the jessies that confined them. His hands were not liberated with so much facility, the mahoe rope being twisted three or four times round his wrists, and tied each time in a double knot; and it was necessary to untie these, for fear of cutting the preacher's fingers, or any part of his hands. While the old gentleman was thus engaged, he saw the butt end of a pistol protruding from the Missionary's pocket, and ventured to make an enquiry respecting it; but Roland was too sulky to utter a word in reply. Mr Guthrie repeated his question; still the prisoner was dumb;—a second and a third time, and yet no answer. His eyes were fixed on those of Fairfax with the sullen malignant sort of scowl that lurks beneath the overhanging brows of a viper.



“ Give *me* the pistol, sir,” said Fairfax to Mr Guthrie : “ give it me.”

Roland shuddered. “ You will not take the law into your own hands,” said he : “ you will not murder me ?”

“ Murder you !” repeated Mr Guthrie. “ Why should we ?”

“ Give me a trial, at least.”

“ He is mad,” said Fairfax. “ Let us discharge the pistol : it has two barrels—what can he want with it ?”

“ Why, Mr Roland,” said the elder gentleman, “ a man of your consideration and profession has no need of arms : what were you going to do with your pistol ?”

“ You see the bruises I have already received,” replied the Missionary : “ I did not choose to expose myself to a repetition of them.”

“ Then why not keep out of the way of them ? You said you could forgive ; you disclaimed vengeance altogether.”

“ But I might be insulted again, Mr Guthrie.”

“ Not if you had told us who insulted you. We should have felt it our duty to avenge you, if only on account of the peace of the island. Who ever heard of an apostle of the Christian church travelling with loaded pistols in his pocket ?”

“And here,” said Fairfax, drawing the charges, “are a brace of bullets in each barrel.”

“Well, gentlemen,” said Roland, “*your* pleasure.”

The old planter smiled as he set him free. “You told us, Mr Roland, that on the last occasion,—that is, the occasion of your getting that black eye,—there was no damsel in the case, neither Lesbian nor Carthaginian. This is a judgment on you of the right sort; for my Quadroon slave was the syren for whom you ran on this rock; but you must not complain of her.”

“No, sir,” said the Missionary; “Miss Michal was not herself to blame; I have no reproach to make to her; I dare say she would not have broken her heart at any liberties which another person in my situation might have taken: my own profession of course prevented me from trifling with her—my avocation, my calling.”

“Ah, ha!” said Mr Guthrie, with a shrewd glance at Fairfax,—“you took *her* handkerchief; you did not throw the handkerchief to her?”

“Perhaps, sir, there would have been—there was—no occasion: Miss Michal was dressed in man’s clothes; and she may not set so much store on her virtue as she ought to do, were she—were she”—(he added, stammering)—“any where but where she is. You see, sir—you know, that in this country all ranks and colours admit of

greater licence in matters of gallantry than would be endured in England."

"The devil they do!" said the old gentleman. "Then all I read of must be false. I have never been there, it is true; but I have always heard that no set of human beings on the face of God's earth can compare with the English in moral depravity, and the misery that attends it; that the metropolis swarms with prostitutes—swarms; that a young man cannot possibly (nor an old man, nor any man) walk along the principal streets after dark, without being literally besieged by women of this class, who feign, fawn, lie, flatter, try to cajole—nay, almost to drag him by force into the most filthy, horrible, and dangerous dens of vice. But I suppose it is all invention."

"Altogether, sir, upon my honour," replied Roland. "The women are too religious to indulge in criminal passions: the Society for the Suppression of Vice has reformed them completely."

"Reformed them!" said the planter. "Then they wanted a reform. But, Mr Roland, how came that Negro to meddle with you, if Michal did not think your behaviour somewhat disagreeable?"

"That, sir, you must inquire of herself; the taste of women is unaccountable: Michal and her

bully, sir, retired together into the bushes yonder."

"What!" said Fairfax, "you do not mean that the Quadroon and that old Negro went away together into the wood?"

"They went away together—that is, one after the other; but they went the same course."

"*Dido! dux et Trojanus!*" said Mr Guthrie. "What next? Do you know that the pocket-handkerchief was this gentleman's?"

"Oh! very likely," said the Missionary.

"It contained a letter to a person under my roof, written on it for want of better materials; and this gentleman is Mr Fairfax."

"I thought as much; I knew it, I believe," said Roland. "He is welcome to the island.—Gentlemen, I thank you for liberating me from my thralldom. Do you know the man who has thus insulted me?"

"I do," said Fairfax; "he belongs to me."

"He is a dabbler in Obeah," replied the Missionary: "I denounce him to you, Mr Guthrie; I will prove upon oath that he deals in philtres and charms; that he practises; that he is looked on as a wizard; that he practises the most—that he dwells in a cave full of abominations."

"A cave!" said Fairfax, interrupting him. "Have you seen the cave?"

“ I have.”

“ Ah,” cried Mr Guthrie, “ it was there then that you got the black eye—What the deuce could take you into that cave? Curiosity? I guessed aright when I asked if you had not been trying to convert the old fellow who lives by the cave. Well, you have succeeded in a strange fashion: you gave him the præcept—he furnished or found in you an example. The Quadroon says that you were very rude to her; that you held her by force, and seized the handkerchief from her against her will.”

“ Ah, sir, you do not know her.”

“ Do I not?” said Mr Guthrie. “ I think she is as good a girl as ever smiled—as kind-hearted and sincere.”

“ Aye, aye,” replied Roland; “ the scoundrel Negro held a weapon to my throat, and vowed to stab me, if I did not suffer him to—to—tie me to the tree.”

“ Well; yet he hurt you not, and you had arms.”

“ He knew it not: I had not time to draw them.”

“ What!” said Mr Guthrie, “ you would have shot him if you could; you would have done murder. *His* case is clear: he hurt not a hair of your head: he has not robbed you, not even

searched you : the girl called to him for help. Master Roland, you are instigated by spleen to charge this man with Obeah practices."

The Missionary scowled on the planter, and burst out into an exclamation—"Well, sir, it is as I thought ; my word is doubted, and the tale of a Mulatto believed against me."

"A Mulatto girl! No," said Mr Guthrie, quietly interrupting him, "she is a Quadroon."

"The offspring of a Mulatto, the grand-child of a Negress," continued Roland. "A fine pass this, when Negro evidence is preferred to a white man's! But this is not the law yet, thank God! Sir, I give you notice I shall make this behaviour of your's a matter of especial information to the Society for emancipating the slaves."

"Why," said Mr Guthrie, "it is what they wish, that Negro evidence should be good against Whites : you do not suppose there is to be an exception in favour of their own agents. *Humanum est errare*. You may sin, as well as others : Michal is a pretty girl."

"Sir, sir," cried Roland, "she has no charms in my eyes. I will state this conversation by letter to — Your object is to bring me into contempt, to bring my religion into contempt ; and that before this gentleman, who, I have not forgotten, entertains similar ideas on many

points with yourself. But the English people, sir, shall know it: they shall avenge me."

"What!" said the old man, "vengeance again? Roland! *who* is it has brought you into contempt? How came you thus disfigured—with your face bruised, your eyes blacked, your linen torn, and your garments besmeared with blood and dirt, as I saw them this morning?"

"No matter, sir: I am a servant of the Lord, and must take all patiently."

"Aye; and you must state all patiently. There are suspicions already afloat respecting you: we hear that you have been *night-preaching* at a ruined settlement in the woods to a gang of runaways, with all the *riffraff* of the Negroes, and this Combah, at whose name you were so staggered to-day."

"Staggered!" repeated the preacher—(the twilight faded so fast, that Roland derived a sort of courage from the invisibility of the passion which his nerves only betrayed to himself)—"staggered! Mr Guthrie, you do not use me as you were wont. It is but a short time, a few hours, since I administered the last consolations of religion to your dying wife; and now am I in return persecuted and insulted by yourself, and your friends here."

"No Mr Roland," said Fairfax; "I have

said nothing; my turn is reserved for a future occasion; but were I in your place, I would desist from intruding again into Mr Guthrie's house."

"Ah, sir," replied Roland, "you have your reasons for wishing so, I doubt not; and I have mine for despising them, and your advice. This gentleman may shut his doors on me; but otherwise I shall make my appearance as usual."

"You had better not: your secret may be safe in your own bosom; but there is a point at which charity becomes a crime."

"Sir, I heed you not; I scorn your advice; I shall come."

"Then take the consequence."

"What?"

"You will meet one there you little expect—one that will confound you."

"Mr Guthrie, I wish you a very good night, sir: I shall pray for your amendment, that you may see the error of your ways.—A curse upon them both!" muttered the preacher in conclusion, as he rode away through the river, taking the road to Belmont; a little to the surprise of Mr Guthrie, who had thought, from comparing notes with Fillbeer, that he would not be very welcome there at present, with a cloud upon his character which shed an additional gloom on the mind of the attorney.



Here let us leave for the present this strange compound of villainy and hypocrisy, and attend Mr Guthrie, and his protégé Fairfax, to the abode of the former, situated but a couple of miles from the spot where this colloquy had taken place. The night was cool and agreeable; and the pedestrian without difficulty kept pace with the cavalier, whose head was full of crotchets which must be explained in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

Oh villain, villain! Abhorred villain—unnatural, detested, brutish, villain.

KING LEAR.

“*ANIMUM rege,*” said Mr Guthrie. “It were an act of virtue to give this knave a dry beating. Is it not a horror to be insulted with such wretches? I should like to know how he received the black eye.”

“I can partly guess,” replied Fairfax. “I saw him this morning, at day-break, fighting with a Negro at M’Lachlan’s deserted settlement in the mountains; and he had been preaching the Lord knows what—something that finally displeased one of his audience, who had nearly throttled him, when I put the whole party to the rout by almost a single word. I shouted out ‘Maroons! The Maroons are upon ye!’”

“And they ran?” said Mr Guthrie.

“One and all—an universal rout. Roland

had his horse there: I tracked him for some miles from the scene of the exhibition."

"What could take him there, and what did he preach, I wonder?"

"Treason, rebellion—so Hamel assured me; but in a mysterious way."

"The scoundrel!" said the old planter. "If he were anything but what he is, he would be laid by the heels in an hour—the very Negroes would tell of him; but, with his affectation of sanctity, and the support he may receive from the canters, I really am almost afraid to meddle with him."

"Sir," said Fairfax, "I would arrest him without delay."

"Ah, my dear boy, you know not what it is to have to do with fanatics who have power. If you can *prove* anything against him, let us go to work. Suspicion will not do: though the island were known to be endangered by him, we must have proof before we move against *him*: reasonable suspicion with others—but handling a *saint* is as dangerous as handling a rattle-snake: the reptile has fangs and poison; you must destroy him when you touch him, or he will sting you to death."

"I can bring proof, I think, of what I assert," said Fairfax. "But what should take this creature to my house? He is gone for consolation to

Mr Fillbeer ; to plot with him against my acquiring possession of my estate."

" Let him plot," said the planter : " we will convene the *posse comitatus*, and have the *custos* to reinstate you. He has no right to remain an hour at Belmont against your will, even though, by your power of attorney being lost, he may retire to one of the other estates. But we must avoid wrangling or violence ; for Fillbeer seems as obstinate as a tree, and will yield to nothing but main force, as he says."

" We shall judge of that tomorrow."

" Aye, tomorrow and tomorrow ; but for tonight !" said Mr Guthrie. " I am at a loss what to do : we shall find Mrs Guthrie in a sad state, I fear. A woful meeting for you this, if you do meet ; but even there I am uncertain :—nay, so strong is the prejudice against you, I know not, I confess, even how to apprise her of your being in the house."

" If she would see me," replied Fairfax, " I could convince her that her prejudice is (I will not say unjust) but wholly founded on a mistaken idea with which Roland has possessed her mind relative to myself."

" What can this be, my boy ?" said the planter. " I am myself bewildered with your mystery : can you not make a confidant of me ?"

" Not except Roland were to accuse me to

yourself as he has done to Mrs Guthrie ; and even then it were better that the charge were buried in oblivion altogether. I am wrong, sir, to intrude myself on her patience : you say she is almost past hope of recovery."

" I fear it is the case, and more from grief of mind than from any bodily illness. Since I was taken into Guadaloupe, she has been a prey to melancholy. You remember, Fairfax, what she was—how amiable, how interesting, how cheerful and happy ; and I the happiest of husbands and of fathers. You will see now what she is : still a young woman—thirty years nearly younger than myself—Ah ! I should not have married her ! When a man weds one so much his junior, he knows not what he undertakes. It is no little responsibility to guarantee the happiness of any woman ; but it is an awful thing to be accountable for that of a young thing who is of course still a child in her mind, and who has fancies and caprices natural to her age, and wants all the attentions that one of a similar age would find time to pay her. But still, Fairfax, her conduct was unexceptionable : simpleton as I was to marry one so young, I never had cause to repent of my marriage for the first fifteen years. It was an age of happiness—a long, long age ; and when I consider the mutability of human things, I ought rather to thank God for the happiness I

*have* enjoyed, than to repine at the loss of it. I hoped my wife would have lived to close my eyes. It is a double calamity that her decline, if I may so call it, should come, too, in the midst of my other misfortunes ; when our properties are become almost trash, and even those made subjects of litigation.”

“ Say no more of that, sir,” cried Fairfax, interrupting him. “ You will not object—you will not forget that you have always honoured me with the title of your son : I shall soon put a stop to all litigations.”

“ No,” said the old gentleman ; “ you must have justice done you ; you must not compromise your rights, though the result be fatal to me and mine. But what must I tell you, Fairfax ? Joanna can never become your wife : we cannot end our differences in that way. Her mother has exacted from her a promise never to think of you again as a lover, nor even as a friend : she would have bound her down never to speak to you, never to listen to you, never to look on you ; but this was too much, especially as the cause of her mother’s dislike to you remains a secret.”

“ It was—it is—too much,” replied Fairfax. “ But I hope she yet lives ; I hope she will herself see me, hear me : I have no fear as to the opinion she will then form of me. But what is to be done with Roland ? Are we to allow him

yet to do such deeds? Good God! To preach up treason and rebellion; to plot against an honourable family, to ruin them; to spare none; your house to be attacked, your daughter carried off—your wife, yourself, murdered! This miscreant has—or had, I should say—a legion of runaways and rascal Negroes at his beck. If he had possessed talents to turn their strength to his own purposes, what might not already have been the result? The very ground trembles beneath our feet; we are walking on a volcano ready to burst into flames.—Ah! shall we suffer this incendiary to be at large? It was he set fire to your trash-house when you were in Guadaloupe:” (The old planter stopped his horse in amazement:) “at least he gave some combustibles to a Negro whom he had bought of my father, to be thrust into the cane trash. I had the story from the Negro this day: he has sworn to come forward at my call, and prove the fact.”

“I am thunderstruck,” replied Guthrie, almost gasping for breath.

“And this too dreadful tale! Alas, he was witness even to that deed of which I am suspected! But his are crimes of horror, acts of cold-blooded desperation, and so contrived that nothing short of desperation on my part can bring them to light. However, let us see him again tomorrow. We must drive him from the haunt of men, from

human society ; and if he dares—but he will not dare —”

“ No violence, Fairfax,” said the old man.

“ No, sir,” replied the other ; “ I will unmask him.”

By this time they had arrived at the chateau of Mr Guthrie, who rode on a few yards in advance of his companion, to prevent any surprise at his arrival, and especially to keep the circumstance from coming to the ears of his wife, lest it might affect her too sensibly ; which there was every reason to apprehend it would do in her present unhappy state of mind.—He had not entered the house many minutes, before Michal came out in the moonlight to meet Fairfax, who had just reached the end of the piazza, and to give him some confidence and assurance, of which he stood not a little in need.

“ Keep a good heart, my kind master,” said the generous soubrette in a whisper. “ There is one here who will be no less happy to see you than I am. You have nothing to fear : the antipathy of Mrs Guthrie is overcome ; I have found means to tell her all.”

“ Is it possible ?” said Fairfax, while his heart beat high with surprise and gratitude.

“ Yes, Mr Fairfax, I was resolved my mistress should not entertain an opinion unworthy of you for an hour, much less that she should carry such



an opinion of you to the grave. I had a dreadful task, and was obliged to speak things indirectly, for her own mind to unriddle. She never answered me ; she took no notice : but I watched her eyes."

"How is she?" said Fairfax, interrupting her.

"Oh!" replied the damsel, "she is very, very ill; but she is not worse since I told her. I watched her eyes, and saw them brighten and sparkle while I spoke; and she turned them upwards to thank God—I am sure of it: I know by the smile upon her face."

"And did she give you no other token?" said Fairfax.

"Yes, the tears ran down her face; and but a little time ago, as I sat by her bedside, she took my hand, and pressed it to her bosom; and when she speaks to me, she calls me dear Michal. But come into the house softly; Miss Joanna is waiting to receive you."

"Does she know anything of what you have told her mother?"

"Not a syllable: take no notice of it; I promised my mistress that the mystery was only known to you and me, and the Negro who told us of it."

Mr Guthrie came to the door of the house, and taking the hand of Fairfax with an affectionate though at first a hesitating grasp, led him into

an apartment removed as far as possible from that of his wife, who he said was asleep. The jealousies of the room, which reached from the ceiling to the floor, were thrown open into the piazza beyond, where he saw a lady in white, seated beside the balustrade, leaning her face on her hand. The sound of footsteps recalled her from the abstraction in which she seemed wrapped; and as the old man said with a tremulous voice—"There, Fairfax—there is my only child!" the young lady rose from her seat, and received his salute, trembling under the effect of the mingled feelings and recollections which oppressed her.

## CHAPTER IV.

—— God be wi' you!—Now I am alone.

Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

HAMLET.

THE king of Jamaica, whom we left on his march to consult the chief of his majesty's Magi, or his Delphic or Dodonian oracle, arrived without any impediment at the lagoon before the cave of Hamel; where he saw, as might be expected, the water spirit—the diving duppie—seated on the sand, and affecting as usual to be blind.

“Where is the watchman?” said the king.

“I wait for him,” replied the other: “he is gone down to the sunken bridge, where Kenrick the robber was shot.”

“Kenrick the robber!” muttered Combah.—  
“Ah, I remember Hamel warred him of the spot. What does he there?”

“He is gone to attend the meeting of a white man with the Mulatto Sebastian.”

“ To attend the meeting ! Why, Sebastian is a robber, is he not ?—a captain of pirates ? ”

“ I know not,” replied the duppie. “ The road is before you, if you are curious : you that have eyes can go and see the meeting ; but you must make haste : the day is almost gone, and the watchman is already there.”

The Brutchie looked towards the mountains and his shadow ; and hastening towards the little cave, mounted by the steps in the rock to the opening by which Fairfax and Michal had penetrated to the orange-garden. There was a descent from this, known to the duppie, by which he had himself travelled down to the farther side of the external lagoon, when the approach of Sebastian had induced him to take to the water ; and in the path or ledge of rock which constituted this descent, was a hole large enough to admit a conch shell which was fixed into it. Combah, taking for granted that the duppie was blind, climbed without hesitation ; and, approaching the aforesaid hole, kneeled down, and applied his lips to the conch shell. He blew a faint note—a second, and a third ; and finding that the Obeah man did not appear, he descended, as the duppie had done, among the foliage, repassed the lagoon, and hurried away towards the sunken bridge, to have a sight of this Sebastian. It was an hour’s walk, even for a king ; and the twilight was pretty well

past by the time that his majesty reached the appointed spot, which was all silent and abandoned; the white man, or two of the white men, having departed for Mr Guthrie's, and the Missionary having trotted off to his friend at Belmont. Let us see how he was received there, while we leave the king to his own reflections beside the rivulet.

Mr Roland rode up to the house with some assurance, in spite of all his degradations, although a little annoyed at the whisperings of the Negroes who were lounging about the road looking out for their young master. The moment the sound of his horse's hoofs was audible, the murmur that ran among the crowd reached the mansion, which, as he approached, he was surprised and mortified to see barricaded; at least all the jealousies were shut, and the door, which was whilom open as the gates of death, he found locked.

He knocked with his umbrella. "Mr Fillbeer—brother Fillbeer—allow me to enter, Mr Fillbeer." He put his lips to the jealousies, to speak; and then his ear, to receive an answer: but he remained in the last position for a very short time, being almost scared by a sort of savage growl from the tenant within, resembling in tone and temper that of an hyena. "What do you want? Fool!—(The last word was in a smothered voice.)

“Your machinations, your lies, have undone me.” (Still the same subdued grumble, though the preacher heard every word.) “I will not trust him,” continued the attorney: “he may be a spy, for anything I know, after all—false to everybody.”

“Mr Fillbeer,” cried the man of grace again, in a more supplicating tone, “I pray of you to admit me to an audience.”

“Speak, sirrah,” replied the fat man: “I can hear you.”

“Sirrah—sirrah!” echoed and re-echoed the Missionary. “He is mad or drunk. You know not whom you address, Mr Fillbeer: it is I—do you not know my voice?”

“I know it, I hate it,” cried the attorney, waxing wroth at Roland’s perseverance. “Go along—get away, I tell you: I will let no Methodist in here. I know not but Fairfax may be a saint. You have been preaching up a rebellion to the Negroes.”

“It is a mistake, sir,” rejoined the holy man. “Am I a dog, that you should use me thus?”

“I tell you—begone!” cried the fat man in a rage. “You must put a crown, must you, on the head of a runaway Negro? Perfidious ass! Begone! I will not parley with so base a knave—a cogging, pettifogging knave. Take care of yourself; the officers of justice will be speedily

on your heels. Though Mr Guthrie is so tame of heart with you, there are others who have no fears. Go, sir, to the gallows !”

Roland was as much astounded as mortified and enraged. “Gallows !” muttered he to himself.

“Aye, gallows,” cried the attorney, overhearing him,—“Gallows. You are charged with murder.”

“Hush, hush, for mercy’s sake !” cried the Missionary in an alarm. “Mr Fillbeer, I take my leave ; I came but to tell you I have seen and spoken with Fairfax.”

“It is a lie,” replied the attorney : “you are all lies.”

“It is no lie, sir,” cried Roland in return. “I parted but now from Mr Fairfax and Mr Guthrie ; and let me tell you, sir, that the pirate Sebastian, whom you fear, is the identical Mr Fairfax, the owner of this estate.”

“Hah !” snarled the attorney—with a wolfish grin. “A pirate again ?—Do you know the watchman Hamel ?—You are accused of murder, I tell you, you sanctified sinner—of murdering a child. I will neither harbour you, nor speak to you more :—begone !”

The Missionary took him at his word, remounted his steed, which he had held by the bridle during this dialogue, and rode away in a dejection of mind such as to this hour he had never before

experienced The violence of Combah, the satire of Hamel, and the indignities he had endured from him, much as they had outraged his feelings, had still brought with them a kind of encouragement to bear patiently—a sense that he had deserved them;—but this from his friend Fillbeer!—to be denounced as a murderer, to be shut out like a dog from his house, to learn from a fellow disciple in the spirit, that the officers of justice were after him, and yet to find no sympathy in that fellow disciple,—to be known as a murderer! A deep sigh escaped from the bosom of Roland, when he turned away his horse from the house; and as he passed his clammy hand down his features, it seemed to him there was a ghastly chill in his fingers; as if his blood, forsaking his extremities, had concentrated itself round his palpitating heart, throbbing with apprehensions to which it had been as yet a stranger.

“ My God—my God !” said the preacher, with a second convulsive sigh,—“ what will become of me?—Oh heavens, what horror! an ignominious death—murdered—hanged :—dreadful! Is there no mercy in heaven?—Is it then come to this? I that aspired to an heiress—a beautiful woman, and to be the head of the church in Jamaica! I—to lose my life on a scaffold—to be hung by some black villain, blackguard, ruffian—oh, terrible! What must I do? Is there no escape? Who taxes



me with murder? Hamel suspected I had shed blood: he said it was the skull of that unhappy child, a white man's child. No matter; I meant it not; what had the mother to do with a Negro lover? And what had the Negro lover to do with me? If she liked me, why did he dare to raise his hand against me?—Oh that I had struck at him, as he at me, with a less fatal weapon!—The child had not then run upon my dagger. I am a lost man:—I'll go to England; they will believe me there; I shall have a party for me. But how to get away? If I had kept friends with Combah or his delegates, even with those wretches of the Obeah cup, a boat had been at my orders, to take me if only to Cuba or St Domingo; and then I could return to England, and revenge myself on Fillbeër, and make out old Guthrie and Fairfax to be what I pleased—aye, and revenge myself on the whole island, Blacks as well as Whites. But the beautiful and accomplished Joanna—death and tortures! is Fairfax to possess her, after all? What an angel of loveliness—what eyes!—But whither am I wandering? I that am to be proscribed, I must fly for my life.”

In the midst of these and similar reflections, one while shuddering at the recollection of the past, then at the prospect of the future, and sometimes breathing fire and slaughter,—the bewildered Missionary had reached the sunken bridge,

on his return home; the spot beside which the disappointed Combah still lingered, he knew not wherefore; as if his fortune, his stars, had kept him there for this encounter with Roland, the person against whom he felt most incensed on account of his late discomfiture.

“This very night,” thought the king, “an attempt should have been made,—a second attempt,—at Mr Guthrie’s. If that Mulatto-man Sebastian had not broken up the meeting, or if Roland had done his duty at once, and crowned me, as he swore to do, we should not have lost our time; our plans would have been properly concerted; and by this hour perhaps the white woman had been in my possession, and the white men had been (many of them) in the other world. But here comes master Roland.”

The moon had just risen from the ocean: its yellow rays illuminated the cloudless atmosphere, and the cloudy face of the Missionary, as he approached the sunken bridge, and presented himself before the black majesty of king Combah, who stood by the water side, contemplating the rider as he drew near, and meditating, without being able to decide exactly, how he should treat or accost his former ally.

“Master Roland,” said he at length, “how d’ye?”

“How do you, Combah?—You see I cannot

travel about by daylight: you have so disfigured me by your brutal and unmanly conduct, that I am obliged to hide myself with the bats and fire flies by day, and flit about like them when the moon shines."

"Stop, master Roland," said the king, who saw that the Missionary was disposed at once to ride through the water: "stop, and hear me speak."

"Make haste then," replied he; "for my time is short: what have you to say?"

"Stop—stop," said the Brutchie again, (for Roland did not much fancy the rencontre, and was for passing the river at once.) "Stop, I say, master Roland: you have something to expect at my hands. You beat and bruised me before all the people last night; and you broke your oath: you did not crown me, as you swore to do; nor pour the holy coco-nut oil on my head."

"It was blood," replied Roland. "If you will deal with jugglers, you must expect to be played tricks. The phial which Hamel gave me contained blood:—would you have been anointed with blood? Who ever heard of such a fashion? And for the rest you can but blame yourself: it was you that seized, that struck me; I struggled in my own defence; yet all might have been well but for that Sebastian, who said that the Maroons were upon us. It was not true: they would have

followed us, if they had been there, and taken some of us. And let me tell you, Combah, *that* Mulatto-man is no other than the owner of this estate here at hand: he is Fairfax. It was he who came from Cuba with the Negroes in your service; it was he who beat them and flung them into the sea; and he is gone to—to claim and to receive the fair-haired beauty as his wife.”

“Indeed!” said the king in a rage: “he is gone to Mr Guthrie’s?”

“He is: I saw them, left them here together; his face was as fair—aye, fairer than mine: I am sure he is Sebastian. He had the same dress, a Spanish hat, and a cutlass; and he threatened me, if I dare come again to Mr Guthrie’s——”

“With what?” said Combah.

“Nay, he told me I should see there some one whose presence would be hateful to me.”

“Pshaw!” cried the Brutchie—“is that all?—Let us go and fire the house and the premises.”

“Ah!” said the preacher, hugging himself at the proposition—“there is too much risk; there is a watch set: and what are you—how many?”

“I am alone,” replied the king.

“Alone!” ejaculated Roland—“Alone! What can you do alone? You do not know then that the militia have been called out; that the whole island is already alarmed; that a reward is offered for your head.”

“For my head?” cried the monarch. “Who has betrayed me? Is it not you, Roland?”

“Me!” replied the preacher in affected amazement. “There were a hundred like yourself spectators and hearers of all that was done and said. Can you trust *them*? How can I betray you, without betraying myself?—I tell you, Combah, flight is *our* only safety at present. If you will do anything, make any attempt for *me*,—we must have a vessel of some kind in readiness, to escape from the island as soon as it is done.”

“Why; what should I gain by that?” said the monarch. “You would have me steal the white girl for you, and then drive me off the country; but you could not keep her by force—and whither could you take her? Not to England.”

“You are right,” replied the Missionary. “And yet,” thought he, “it were to be in paradise to possess her; to call her mine but for an hour; to anticipate, to blast the expectations of Mr Fairfax; to wring from him the cup of bliss which fortune offers to his lips; to snatch the rose, to rifle all its sweetness, then throw it like a loathsome weed to him, or to this blockhead; but he has not the heart to appreciate what we idolize: any white woman, an abandoned prostitute, would be still a queen for him, so she were white; anything for his ambition, for his vanity.”

His majesty was in a brown study, as well as his vicar, not altogether relishing the idea of having a price set on his woolly head. Had the canoe been undamaged, he would have got together a few of his associates, and decamped, first trying to carry off the young lady. He next thought of transporting the same pretty personage to the Obeah man's cave; but that genius (Hamel) had more influence over the Brutchie than the Missionary would have believed, and kept even the monarch at a respectful distance, when the privacy, and we may add the property, of his cave was invaded: Combah dared not carry the young woman there without the knowledge and approbation of the wizard, whom he was not a little anxious to see for the purpose of concerting some plan for future operations. For himself, he thought not of flight except he could first commit some signal act of vengeance on the Whites; although he began to despair of effecting anything at present towards establishing himself on the throne. The island being once alarmed, all precautions would be taken, not only to prevent an insurrection, but to insure the punishment of all whose conduct could be construed into rebellion or treason. Combah knew too well the danger he had incurred; but he could shift his quarters: except the Maroons should give him up, he had but little to fear:—if the fastnesses of

the Blue Mountain should fail him, there were other wildernesses in the west, in Clarendon or Trelawney ; or he could seize a boat and steer to Cuba, conceal himself on board an American, or get taken up by some English homeward-bound ship. There were many modes of escape known to him ; and he was more occupied with the thoughts of his revenge than of his running away.

Roland was equally anxious on both points ; but security from justice was perhaps the predominant consideration with him at this moment, terrified as he had been by the denunciation of Mr Fillbeer. Harassed by the forebodings which this denunciation had caused, it was little to be expected that he should take this opportunity of holding forth to the Brutchie upon his apostacy and tergiversation from the faith which he had once sworn to hold ; yet as the least expected circumstances frequently get the better of probability, so Roland, in the midst of his own troubles, began to read the king a lecture on the evident interposition of Providence which had punished him for his backsliding by destroying his hopes of empire. “ Had you stuck to the true faith,” said the Missionary ; “ you had—but no matter. Why did you cleave to the idolater, the worshipper of Baal, who with all his tricks has left you in the lurch?—You have debarred me from the power of assisting you.”

“Why?”

“You are an infidel. Had you remained a Christian, one of the pure sect to which I belong, I could have taken you by the hand, led you through fire and water, cried you up to my countrymen as an enlightened, a devout, and intelligent enthusiast; I could have made half Europe idolize you—nine-tenths of England canonize you.”

“What’s that?” said the king. “*Canonize*—shoot me?”—

“Pah!” replied the Missionary, taking courage, as humbled courtiers are wont when they are agreeably astonished at the ignorance of princes. “*Canonized* means sanctified—a kind of mental worshipping. All my countrymen would have felt for you, petitioned for you, invited you to England, to their houses, filled the newspapers with your story, and the shops with your picture, made subscriptions for you; you might have brought away a *harem* of white women.”—

“Nonsense!” replied the king. “The English are not such fools. Roland, you have deceived me too often: I know the English women abhor the Negroes. But leave off this: I will go home with you to your house; I shall be close to master Guthrie’s; I can see what is going on there; I shall know how to deal with Mr Fairfax, and how to carry off Miss Joanna for my friend.”



“To my house!” cried Roland in amazement.

“To my house.”

“Aye, master parson, to your house : come on !”

“Never!” exclaimed the Missionary. “Impudent Negro ! What ! shall I harbour you ?—I receive a Negro as my guest !”

“Aye, master Missionary ; no more words ; we know one another : I shall come.”

The Missionary felt for his pistol, but recollected the balls had been taken out ; and Combah had a machet. “Now,” thought he at last, “I can deliver him up—a glorious idea ! Revenge and—Oh ! the child—the child ! But for that I had now triumphed.”

## CHAPTER V.

Monster, I will kill this man : his daughter and I will be  
king and queen, save our graces !                      TEMPEST.

“I SHOULD have gained a reputation indeed,” said the Missionary to himself, as he rode through the water. “This delivering up a rebel—a prince of rebels—a villanous apostate—would have made me whole—round and sound. God ! What a fortune is here marred, and by such a circumstance—a deed I thought almost forgotten—unknown to the Whites. Oh the black dolt ! To thrust his head into the lion’s jaws ! Yet he shall pay for it. If I grind him not for his apostacy, may I be ground myself ! The rack, the gallows, were too good for him ; his violence to me I could forgive—his blows, his efforts to destroy me ; but the insults to my religion, his knuckling down to Hamel in my presence, and the d———n of the Obeah cup. Ah, ha ! He shall be racked for

this. Fool that I was not to invite him to my abode, though perhaps 'tis better he should thus intrude; the rights of hospitality are not his due. —I have him; he is mine.”

The Brutchie walked by the side of the horseman with a hand on one of the reins, thinking that the trickified Missionary might give him the slip: for rogue as he was himself, he never dreamed of being given up by his vicar as a rebel; in fact, he thought himself of too much importance to the preacher to be put wilfully in the way of danger, although he was well aware of the aversion that Roland would have to receive him as a guest in his house, especially as he was so far condemned as to have a price set on his head.

The Missionary, in his turn, thought of securing the royal personage, and getting the reward, which was something considerable; but the charge which Fillbeer had revealed to him, distressed him to a degree of wretchedness and anxiety that counterbalanced all the satisfaction he felt from having Combah in his power. The Obeah man knew the fact of the murder, if such it were to be called. The cause—the spectator of it—was the Negro we have called the duppie. There had been but one other person, a Mulatto woman—the mother of the child—who witnessed the deed; and she had not long survived her off-

spring; she was in fact lately dead; but she might have told of the deed,—though still living evidence would be wanting to convict him. And where was the Negro?—Roland little imagined him so near at hand; yet he knew he lived,—and he knew the prejudice existing against himself, chiefly—as he flattered himself—on account of his ultra religious principles. He felt a conviction of the triumph his enemies would experience in his downfall: the cause—the cause of emancipation would be delayed, and his own sect brought into disrepute; but even this were nothing to his fears of an ignominious death. If he could escape the penalty of the law on account of the murdered child,—his association with rebels; his crowning a black man—the consequence of these he could avoid by turning informer; and his attempts at the abduction of Miss Joanna might be hushed up in the same way. Then came the recollection of Joanna's mother. His brain was almost maddened as he rode along; and when he came to the parting of the roads, one of which led to Mr Guthrie's, and the other to his own abode, he more than once thought of riding away from the king, and burying himself at the other end of the island, till he could find means, among the pure in spirit, of getting away in safety to America, or to England. However, Combah held his bridle too securely to allow of this escape;

and they reached the house together, followed by a Negro who had joined them at the parting of the roads, and who proved to be no other than the Obeah minister Hamel, who begged to speak a few words to master Missionary—to-night if he pleased; or, if more agreeable to him, the early morning would do as well, and he would wait.

As soon as Cuffy had taken his master's horse, the Missionary turned about to the Obeah man, and bid him begone from his presence; denouncing him as a villain and a robber, an incendiary, a delegate of the devil, and half a dozen other equally amiable characters. The Obeah man smiled and begged pardon for his intrusion, which was caused, as he said, "solely by his concern for brother Roland's safety."

"Brother me no brothers," said the preacher, pulling out his pistol. "Infamous rascal, begone! Thank me for your life,—you have attempted mine."

"I have a dagger," replied Hamel very calmly; "but I have not shed blood with it. I drew it in defence of innocence. Put up your pistol. Think you that I am ignorant of its contents? I come to save you. What, brother Roland!"

"Avaunt, fiend!" cried the preacher, overcome with rage and horror; "avaunt! Combah, give me your weapon; strike him to the earth!"

“Softly, master parson! You have blood enough to answer for already. The officers of justice will be here again with the day light. Hush! You speak too loud! You are discovered! One of the rabble you called brother last night, has been brought into the town by the Maroons; he has confessed the preaching and the plan of revolt; and, to save his life, has undertaken to prove you the assassin of a child. Aye, aye, the mother on her death-bed revealed the circumstance to him.”

“Well, and what then?” cried Roland. “Such evidence is good for nothing—a second-hand story—and for such a purpose!”

“True or false,” replied the Obeah man, “you best know; but he who is taken has promised to produce a witness—a blind man, Roland, one whom, as he says, you bought from Mr Fairfax.”

“He was a slave,” replied the Missionary; “his testimony would be unavailable; and he is dead.”

“Do you then know him? But no matter: among friends there are no secrets, master Roland: he was a free man; you made him free yourself”

“He is dead, he is dead,” said Roland.

“Now let me advise you to be gone; there is a boat for you on the beach, and an American schooner sails tomorrow for Baltimore. Get out to sea, you and your boy Cuffy; the night is fine;

you will be taken up by the American ; and here are ten doubloons for your expenses. You will find some of your friends, some of your family, in America. I know, you see, something of your affairs ; will you take the money ? You have more of your own ; pack up that and your goods, and farewell. And you, Combah—will you go with him ? You must fly the country. If we had the strongest inducement to bring about a rebellion, at this moment it would be impossible. The whole island is by this time alarmed ; we should act like madmen to attempt anything for at least twelve months to come.

“ I cannot fly,” replied the king.

“ Nor will *I* fly with this man,” said the Missionary ; “ nor will I fly at all ; let me go ; leave me, both of you ; this is my own abode ; you will not violate it : at least you, Hamel, shall not enter it with my good will.”

“ Master parson,” replied the conjurer, “ I know you have denounced me, but you have more to fear for yourself. I have done my duty, and I shall leave you : I have done more than my duty—I have foregone my revenge ; but it was for brother Roland.”

“ Miscreant !” cried the Missionary,—(his rage over mastering his other passions)—“ may the Lord judge between you and me, and reward us both accordingly ! May the spirit——”

“Hah, hah!” said the Obeah man, interrupting him with a smile and a bow,—“Farewell, master Roland, for to-night; you will want me, and you may find me tomorrow with the dawn, brother;—and for you, Combah, the spirits and the stars are against you. Stir not in rebellion; and let me see you at the cave. Give me your promise—you will do nothing against the family of master Guthrie, nor against master Fairfax? The time is not fit; you will bring down ruin on the island, on yourself, and the cause of the Coromantins.”

“I will make no promise,” replied the king. “Joanna must belong to me; I will have her.”

“To *you*?” said the Missionary. “To you, a miserable Black! What! after all, then, it was for yourself that you would have stolen her? And this is your faith, Combah!”

“Faith!” replied the monarch; “say nothing more of faith. You knew, I dare say, that I designed her for myself. Did you flatter yourself that I would take such measures for you? Or did you dream of retaining her, or any white woman? Ha, ha! vain and conceited fool! We knew your thoughts, your hopes, your passions; we soon discovered your treachery; we made what use of you we could; little enough, for master Roland was false to everybody. Get to the boat that Hamel says is ready; take the money, and begone; or this machet shall end



your worthless life! A miserable Black, a Negro, gives you your life, and bids you fly. Would you have done as much for me? No coward! wretched, wretched coward! You may thank my mercy that I did not, that I do not, destroy you; but you shall not remain here to betray me, nor any of my subjects, nor Hamel; nor shall you live here to possess by any fortune this white girl whom you meant to steal—to violate, as you would call it, master Roland. Do you think we were blinded with your religion, with your pretences, your psalms, and hymns, and prayers? Do you think we could not see the wild boar dressed up in all this trumpery—the cunning, plotting, cheating, merciless, murderous priest—the sensual hypocrite? Yes, yes, I grant you, you deceived many; but think not you deceived me.”

“Not you!” said Roland. “The wise, the prudent, the virtuous Combah! Were not *you* deceived? Why did you wish to stuff your stupid head into a crown? But why do I talk with you? You call me a coward: it is you who are a coward. You are armed, and I have no weapon; my pistol is unloaded. Let me go into my house and get a cutlass. I will fight you.”

“I will cut you, if you stir,” replied the king. “You shall hear me speak my free thoughts before I leave you.”

“Let me get a sword,” cried the preacher, re-

treating to the door of his house. "You are a coward, Combah, to insult me with this bravado, while you are armed and I am defenceless. I have no one here but my boy Cuffy."

"'Tis false," rejoined the Black. "I saw a brown girl this minute looking at you from the window."

"Let me go! stand off!" exclaimed Roland, seeing the Negro still advancing on him. "Hold your hand, you brutal assassin! Open the door, Rachel! Quick! open the door!—Cut-throat!"

"Cut-throat and miserable Negro!" said the monarch. "Villain! hypocrite! take that!"

He cut at him; but the door opening at the same moment, the Missionary slunk back sufficiently to escape damage; and before the king could recover his position for a second blow, Roland had discharged both the barrels of his pistol in the face of the assassin, flung the weapon at the monarch's head, and retreating into his castle, shut and barricadoed his door against the discomfited Brutchie and his unmoved, and seemingly uninterested, companion—the dealer in magic.

Combah was stunned by the blow which he received from the pistol used as a missile; and his face was terribly burnt and disfigured by the gunpowder and wadding discharged from it. He had staggered, and fallen to the ground, where he

lay, not altogether insensible, but rolling as if in agony ; so much so, that Hamel suspected the Missionary had contrived to slip another bullet into one of the barrels before he discharged it. He picked up his companion, who complained that his eyes were burned, and begged of Hamel to kill him on the spot, and not let him fall into the hands of his enemy, and to take care of himself ; for Roland had most probably more fire-arms in the house, and would shoot at him, and would murder both of them if he could : at any rate, he would kill the Obeah man, and reserve him, the Brutchie, as an acceptable sacrifice to make his peace with the authorities of the island. “ You said that you had a dagger, Hamel,” continued the king. “ Kill me with it ; but first set fire to the house of this hypocrite. Though I cannot see, I shall at least hear the flames, and hear his groans ! Take my sword ! Kill him if he attempts to escape. A cruel beast ! He has blinded me for ever ! Curse him—curse him, his mother, and all that belong to him !”

“ Hush, hush !” said the wizard. “ I have no fire ; let us leave him to the law ; and get you on my back. There are lights coming ! The watch at Mr Guthrie’s has seen the flash of the pistol, or heard the report. I can see Negroes running about with torches, and lights moving at the other house to the right. Quick, quick ! And

Roland is opening the jealousies to fire. I will carry you to a place of safety. You are not hurt seriously, I am sure. Get on my back. I can cure your eyes ; and you shall have your revenge on this preaching beggar.”

The Obeah man got the Brutchie on his back, and staggered off with him just in time, by slipping round the corner of the house, to escape the contents of a fowling piece discharged at him by the apostolic Roland, who accompanied the explosion with a fraternal benediction. “ Brother, take that ! The Lord rewards you according to your merits ! ”

But they did not receive the reward so piously intended by the Missionary, profiting only by the intention ; for the gun hung fire ; and while the powder was blazing from the touchhole, Roland lost not only his aim, but forgot the direction of the muzzle of his piece, and turned it too near the wooden wall of his house, where some of the rotten boards took fire from the explosion, while the curtain of the window was enflamed from the touchhole. The musquito-net of the bed was speedily in a blaze ; and while the Obeah man, like another Eneas carried off his more juvenile and blinded Anchises towards the seashore, he looked back with more surprise than gratification on the dwelling of the preacher, which soon blazed to the heavens in one vast sheet of fire,

illuminating the scenery around, and lighting the wizard along the rugged path leading to the rocks, among which he tottered beneath the cumbersome carcass of the king.

“I am not wounded,” said the latter, at length, descending from his bearer: “I am but blind. Lead me where you will—I can follow.”

The wizard took him at his word, glad to be relieved from his weight. He placed him on his legs, and conducted him, with little bungling, to the sea-shore.

## CHAPTER VI.

——— Whatsoc'er we perpetrate,  
We do but row, we're steered by fate.

HUDIBRAS.

SOLOMON the wise has said, that "there is a time for all things;" but some other Solomon has insisted on it that there is no time when all things are to be said; and we must content ourselves to abide by the opinion of the latter, merely because it answers our purpose. It would, no doubt, be a very pretty and a very pleasant business to relate all the conversation, as well as to describe the feelings which caused and were caused by the conversation that passed between Mr Fairfax and the young lady of his heart, the beautiful and interesting Joanna. But besides that in reality such dialogues are only fitted for the performers in them, a third person, far from taking any interest in these matters, generally turns away from them, sometimes with a jest—often

with pity, and it may happen occasionally with contempt. If such be the case in actual life, why should we incur the risk of exciting any of these inharmonious feelings in relating what belongs to actual life?

A painter knows it to be his business—at least in the higher departments of his art—to select from nature what is grand, striking, beautiful, and interesting. The deformities of the creation are to be concealed; the vulgarities are to be omitted, with all which is inefficient, dull, flat, stale, or unprofitable; and if the subject demand any of this, it must be clothed or disguised in some undefined vestment, some magic tint, of air or distance, of light or shadow. Much must be left to the imagination of the spectator; not because it spares the pains of the painter, but because it is the business of the artist to set the spectator's imagination at work. It is to the feelings and fancies which he can thus excite, that he will be indebted for the more flattering part of the triumph he is to enjoy from this successful exertion of his talents.

But our readers may already wish the author transfixed with his own pen for thus detaining them from the more important incidents in this true story: therefore we shall proceed, first referring every lady and gentleman to her or his own fancy for every word

that passed on the occasion of the meeting between Fairfax and Joanna. They will easily represent to themselves the very looks which accompanied every speech, active and passive—how handsome they were, both of them—how amiable, interesting; and all the rest of the scene, not omitting the occasional œillades of old Guthrie. The adventures of the gentleman were related;—but still a very small proportion of happiness was elicited, after all, from the conviction and contemplation of their present situation—the young lady under the sacred promise recorded in a former chapter, and the person who had exacted it—the unhappy mother—lying, as they had but too much reason to believe, on a death-bed:—dying in fact, if not of a broken heart, of the melancholy entailed on her by the inhuman conduct of the fanatic Roland.

The others of the party were still in conversation where we left them, when the double report of Roland's pistol called their attention to the window. Old Guthrie, taking on himself the office of commander-in-chief, bid Fairfax remain where he was, and not on any account venture out of the house. One of the watch that had been set, came up to alarm the house. Others, trusty Negroes, went fearlessly, with pieces of blazing torchwood, towards Roland's house; and one or two went silently and secretly in the same



direction. The report of the gun accelerated their motions; and Mr Guthrie was hardly satisfied that the sound proceeded from Roland's small dwelling, before he saw that gentleman's abode burst into a flame which raged with the fury of a volcano. Still he kept his garrison at home, knowing that the contrivance of a fire has been frequently resorted to for the purpose of enticing the white inhabitants from their houses by Negroes intent on rebellion, that they might offer a surer mark for the guns of the rebels, or expose themselves with more certainty of detection and destruction to any weapons which the insurgents might be provided with. The death of the Whites, of the masters, the leaders, must be the first object on such occasions. The slaves, without a captain and without a plan, can of course offer no useful resistance. They would be expected to run away, from a double motive perhaps; at any rate, they would not know what to fight for, if their master and his family were killed.

Therefore Fairfax moved not from the house; but taking his station in the piazza, by the side of Mr Guthrie, contemplated in silence the fire which, blazing at the distance of half a mile or thereabouts, would have exhibited very distinctly the performers in such a scene, had there been any; and as there were none visible, this circumstance

increased the suspicions of both the spectators, who concluded, with greater appearance of reason, that an attack was meditated on Mr Guthrie, and that the conspirators were in ambush somewhere between that gentleman's house and the fire, calculating on his hastening to render every assistance in his power. The old planter and his comrade were provided with a sufficiency of fire-arms, and they had Negroes enough on the alert in case of an assault; but though the fire burnt fiercely, no one was visible except the Missionary himself, who was seen to mount his Spanish steed, and gallop impatiently towards Mr Guthrie's.

"Wonder of wonders!" whispered the old gentleman to Fairfax. "Here is Roland coming to us."—He whispered, for he feared to alarm his wife, who was still in a lethargic stupor.

"There never was infatuation like his," replied Fairfax in the same whisper. "It is not enough to say he is mad. Such a compound of abominations was surely never before heaped together in one human being. We must not let him disturb Mrs Guthrie: it might be fatal to her. There are two or three persons now about the fire; your Negroes I think;—but they may spare their pains, for the building is already destroyed, and the flames begin to decrease; and here comes this extraordinary, this execrable villain! With what confidence! He may have some wicked intention;

for he is capable of anything. Let us be on our guard. I should not wonder if he were actually leagued with rebel Negroes, and at the bottom of this contrivance of conflagration."

The illumination of the fire lighted the Missionary to the door of the house, where Mr Guthrie met him with a gun in his hand; and putting his finger on his own mouth, intimated to him, by that sign, the propriety of holding his peace; but Roland burst forth with "Treason and rebellion!"

"Hold your tongue, sir!" said the planter in a tone somewhat above a whisper, looking at the same time with as much fierceness at him as he could assume in his funny face—"Hold your tongue, sir!"

The Missionary dismounted from his horse, and adopting the same tone of voice, affected to fall into an extacy of rage and indignation at the treatment he had experienced, as he said, for his religion's sake.

"Persecutions, — persecutions! My house burned!—A Negro I know to belong to Mr Fairfax—I shot at him."

"You have not killed him?" said the planter.

"I know not—I hope I have. Had you not taken the balls from my pistol, I had ended both the rebels."

"Who was the other, then? There were but two?"

“An apostate—a fellow who called himself king of Jamaica.”

“There were no others, then?” said Fairfax.

“I know not,” replied the preacher, offering to walk in; but Fairfax put himself in his way.

“You must not enter here, sir! The officers of justice have been after you already; they will seek you again. I cautioned you against presuming to intrude into this house. If you hope for mercy, for safety, pray begone, and do not tempt your fate beneath this roof. You are accused of murder, and though you may have no compunctious visitings, for your heart seems harder than brass or marble, you must at least be sensible to your safety. Your disgrace will dishonour your cause, and shame the religion you profess. You will meet with no sympathy, and if the charge be proved, you will have to suffer a public and ignominious execution!”

“It is all false,” replied the preacher; “I am not that monster. I have no sins to answer for. Let me enter.”

“You have no sins to answer for!” said Fairfax.

At this moment Joanna made her appearance in the piazza, and the preacher started at the sight. He looked at her, and at his own blazing tenement; then again at the pretty creature whose anxious look (rendered palpable by the fire) and timid step caused her to appear more

interesting in the eyes of Roland ; and although they revived the passionate remembrance of the ardour with which he had long sighed for the possession of her, they awakened again the now bitter recollection of that fatal night when, by the blaze of a similar conflagration, he had beheld her once beautiful mother trembling from similar apprehensions.

“ I shall not reproach you,” said Fairfax, “ with the scandalous tales with which you have endeavoured to poison the mind of this young lady. A crime of a deeper, of the deepest, die you have endeavoured to fix on me ; and such measures had you taken to prevent its coming to my knowledge——But go : you are every way beneath my notice—keep your secret still ; but begone.”

Roland stood trembling for awhile at the door, looking anxiously at Mr Guthrie, and then at his daughter, whose white garments were waving in the night breeze which streamed down from the mountains, and then again at Fairfax ; and seemed to be hatching some fresh falsehood, some plausibility or some scheme which might yet leave him a hope, however vague, however extravagant, of aspiring to the possession of Joanna, whom he could not behold without almost adoring in his imagination. He admired—he actually idolized her, monster as he had shewn

himself; and what seemed almost anomalous in his character, he had taste sufficient to appreciate her good qualities, her accomplishments, her kindness of heart, her affectionate disposition. He had even thought that with such a companion he could have been the happiest of men. He had pictured to himself the interest she would take in the fate, the fortunes, the domestic happiness, of him she loved. The possession of her person, that is, the thought of such a triumph, was fuel to the fire which these ideas kindled. Unfortunately, he had taken no measures which could have rendered him acceptable to her under any circumstances, and he knew too well the opinion he merited in her estimation. He was aware that he had but little chance of obtaining her by fair means, and he was one of those who reckon it not improper to use any other means in the acquisition of a wife or a mistress—as it might happen,—calculating that success justifies the attempt, as in cases of treason and rebellion. But within the last day he had thought of Joanna with feelings of remorse, not originating in repentance, but emanating from the conviction that no successful revolt could be maintained by the stupid crew to whom he had preached, and the *roguish* leaders with whom he had to cope. Nothing less than a revolt, and that a successful one, at least for a time, could put Miss Guthrie

in his power ; and, with such associates, he found he had no chance of securing her. Still he could not endure to see her the bride of another, though a white man ; and as he looked at her under the circumstances we have described, he felt that he could have sacrificed her to his despair, and slain Fairfax with her, if he could have ensured his escape after such a deed ; for with all his unaccountable conduct, he had a sufficient self-love, and missed no precaution for his own safety. He had already tried all to obtain her, that his head or heart dictated—courtesy of a spiritual kind, cant, hypocrisy, lies of all sorts, scandal, slanders on his rival, treason, rebellion. There remained nothing but violence, and the affectation of repentance. The first he would have tried, but the means were snatched from him. He determined to have recourse to the last ; and no sooner had he formed the resolution, than he attempted to put it in force.

“ Miss Guthrie,” he said, addressing himself to her, “ and Mr Fairfax, do not condemn me unheard, as you hope for justice hereafter and mercy. I am innocent of murder—I have shed no blood wilfully—thank heaven ! So dire a deed weighs not on the soul of the unfortunate Roland. My duty, my profession, expose me to all kinds of calumny. How easy is it to misrepresent ! With the prejudice which exists against my call-

ing, a Negro may report falsehoods of my doctrine, or of my conduct, and crowds will listen to him. A watchman of yours, Mr Fairfax, even now set fire to my house. Such a man may have told you lies of me. He is a dealer in magic—an Obeah man, whose poisonous practices are only rendered abortive and contemptible by the antidote of mine—I may say of ours—the only true religion;—for we are fellow-christians, Mr Fairfax—do not forget that!—although we may differ as to the degree in which religion should influence all our actions. This Obeah man has an interest in supplanting me in the estimation of all the neighbouring Negroes—in your estimation above all, Mr Fairfax; and what have I done to yourself? Forgive me if I presume to fancy—to have fancied myself—your—your—your rival, Mr Fairfax. My religion is a religion of love. In offering myself, with my humble possessions and pretensions, to this young lady, I knew I had little more to offer than an honest heart, Mr Fairfax. I could not expect to vie with yourself in person or wealth; but in the grace of divine truth, in humility of mind, in faith and hope, and the profoundest conviction of the importance of walking in the steps of him who died for us, I will yield, Miss Guthrie,—to no man, Mr Fairfax.”

Mr Fairfax was struck dumb at his assurance.



“ I have used none but what would be considered legitimate *ruses de guerre*, in speaking of you to this lady. You would not have fought my battles, my young friend, had I been in your situation ; nor could I have blamed you, nor did I blame you, except for making a joke of my seriousness when my principles were called in question—the principles, the fundamental principles, of the only divine revelation. Excuse me, Mr Fairfax, if I put such conduct in an unfavourable light. This young lady’s parents did not forbid my suit, and we were led to believe that you never meant to return to the island ; but in every case the field was open to me. I had a right to propose myself to Miss Joanna. I wished indeed, most devoutly, to open her heart to receive a better impression of divine truth. A religious love first of all inspired me ; although, knowing Miss Joanna, I could not fail of loving her for the beauties of her mind and person. This latter is a more selfish feeling, I own ; and this I could renounce, but her salvation is as dear to me as my own ; nor shall I think I have lived in vain, except—except——My God ! What’s this ?—Who are you ?—Oh, begone !—Touch me not ! Why, what art thou ? ”

The Missionary’s locks began actually to bristle up, as he saw by the glare from his still burning mansion the face of that Negro whom we have ycleped the duppie, staring intently at

him as he stood still at the door, making this his long-winded defence.

The duddie was clad in his black shirt, and had assumed the strange appearance of blindness which it was sometimes his pleasure to counterfeit. Roland drew back a step or two; and Fairfax, looking out, beheld the object which alarmed the Missionary; an object, of course, familiar to him. The duddie held his hand, or rather one of his fingers, in a threatening attitude at the preacher, from whom he was separated by some palings which inclosed a garden; but on seeing the Missionary offer to recede, and being sensible that Fairfax had also discovered him, he disappeared, though very deliberately, among the bushes in the garden.

The preacher, though in a cold perspiration, had begun to pluck up courage again, when he heard the voices of several people coming, evidently from the fire,—some on horseback, others, and among them soldiers from the Bay, on foot. The alarm had been communicated from its too evident cause; and prompt assistance, in the supposition of a Negro attack, was at hand. Several individuals, finding that the house was deserted (for the brown girl and Cuffy had run away from it) were on their route to Mr Guthrie's, who, still anxious to spare the feelings of his dying wife, sallied out to meet them, to learn the

particulars concerning the fire, and the attack, if such it were, and to join with those who had come to the scene of action. Among these came young Cuffy, who ran up to Mr Guthrie, and told him that master Roland himself had accidentally set the house on fire, with the other particulars of the affair, not omitting that one of the Negroes had cut at his master and tried to kill him. The old gentleman was intent on disposing of the strangers who arrived, and making excuses on the score of his domestic calamity; but hearing how the life of Roland had been actually threatened and endangered by a lawless Negro, he felt bound so far to recognise the dues of hospitality, even in his case, as to offer him an asylum till the morning. But for the vision which he had just seen, the Missionary would have hailed and accepted this invitation as an auspicious omen. The duppie however had virtually blasted him and his last hope; and until he could dispose of him in some way or other, Mr Guthrie's house would be no abode for him, nor did he feel inclined to encounter the various persons who had sought this rendezvous; but taking advantage of the diversion caused by their approach, he made a respectful bow to Mr Fairfax, and silently withdrew himself, leading away his horse, which he surrendered to Cuffy, without being aware of what he was doing; so absorbed were his mental

faculties in bewildering ruminations on his perverse fortune. He returned on foot to the ruins of his house, by this time levelled with the ground, being built solely of wood. He had not even attempted at first to quench the flames; but throwing his few moveables out of the door and windows, and his writing-desk, with his small stock in hand, after them, he had loaded his brown housekeeper with the last, and taken himself off to Mr Guthrie's, as we have described.

He now found the place deserted altogether; his few chairs and tables lying untouched on the grass, and the smoke streaming from the smouldering embers into which the rest of his property was converted. His loss, however, was not great—a hired house, and but little furniture; nevertheless, the conviction of his situation, combined with the picture of desolation before him to strike on his heart a sensation of the deepest melancholy.

“What now remains?” said he. “The measure of my cri—— my misfortunes, is nearly full!—The officers of justice are to be *here* tomorrow. *Here!* What will they find?—Dust and ashes! The vanity of nature! But these cut-throats may first return to murder me, and that crew who must needs go blundering up to Mr Guthrie's because my wretched little home was on fire. The country is alarmed. I must begone, or be

the butt for every arrow of scandal, malice, and uncharitableness! But whither shall I go? There is a boat on the shore, so Hamel said. He is not disposed—he did not seem disposed—to injure me. He offered me money of his own. It was that dolt, that idiot Combah, who was so cruel and ferocious. But what can be expected from an apostate? And to owe my safety to a dealer in magic—to an infidel! one condemned to everlasting —— to the pains of hell for ever! to the fire which is not quenched! It might be Satan who thus tempted me—for he can tempt, and does tempt. He is the prince of this world. But I fear him not! With the armour of righteousness, and the shield of faith, I shall pursue my course in spite of his machinations. Satan, I defy thee! Nevertheless, I will not neglect human means for my temporal safety. The boat—the boat may be of use.—Cuffy, you heartless villain, why did you not stir in defence of your master? You that saw the nasty blackguard Negro with the raw forehead attempt to take my life, and never moved a finger to assist or save me! Yet you saw the finger of heaven was there, coward! You saw the interposition of Providence to save—to rescue the servant of God! But what occasion was there for you to run with all that nonsense to Mr Guthrie, and to tell him that I set fire to my house myself? It was not I, fool! It was the

fire of my gun directed at assassins, who were thus guilty of the crime of arson—that is, burning, wilful burning—Cuffy! You had no need to speak to Mr Guthrie at all. You should see only with my eyes and speak with my tongue. But some of these creatures are again coming from Mr Guthrie's. Let us retire among the bushes and watch them. Or stay! There is nothing they can steal: leave the chairs and tables, and come with me down to the seashore.”

“No, master,” replied the boy; “I will stay here and watch the tables and chairs, and take them for Miss Rachel, the brown housekeeper. I won't go to the seashore at this time of night. Those two Negroes went down there; one carried the other on his back, master; I won't go there after them. They may kill me, for they have got a sword and the pistol you threw at them.”

“I have another, a better pistol,” said the preacher; “loaded with bullets. They have no ammunition. I shall be a match for them!”

“No, no, master,” replied the boy; “please go alone. Miss Rachel is gone up to her mother's on Mr ——'s mountain;—please let me run after her.”

“I command you to follow me,” said the preacher, “or you shall have the Mosaic allowance tomorrow—forty stripes save one—from the

workhouse driver, you little execrable rascal !  
Follow me !”

He spoke and threatened in vain.

As the voices approached, Cuffy took fresh advantage of his master’s confusion; and as the latter mounted his horse again, and turned his head towards the sea, the former darted into the bushes, and ran with his utmost expedition towards the mountain, where Rachel had found a refuge in the abode of her mother.

## CHAPTER VII.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which taken at the flood to fortune leads :  
(Omitted once, it never flows again,  
Or 'tis a tide of woes a tempest feeds,  
Whose ebb the shipwreck'd heart expects in vain.

ANON.

ROLAND had proceeded but a few paces when he was again overtaken by the Obeah man, who accosted him as civilly as usual, and told him that the marshal's man, whom he knew by sight, was come up from the Bay to take him on a charge of murder.

The sound of Hamel's voice made the preacher instinctively feel for his pistol ; but the Obeah man cautioned him against the use of his weapon, and intimated, that he must be mad to confound thus his friends with his foes. " Master Roland," he said, " I shall respect my oath, and I will never harm you but in self-defence. I have had you in my power. I do not seek your life. I came, as you must know, to succour you—to help you to escape from the law. My services are



still at your command. Think, if you please, what must be the consequence of continuing here. You will be tried for killing a child ! Stay ! You may think to escape."

"It was accidental," replied the Missionary, interrupting him : "I am not guilty !"

"But you will be tried," rejoined the wizard ; "and you will be found guilty. The guilty man escapes often ; the innocent man sometimes is unjustly punished. The justices and the White jury here will find you guilty."

"You pretend to be a prophet," said the Missionary.

"I am so," replied the Obeah man.

"Pshaw !" said Roland.

"Farewell then—you will regret me tomorrow !" rejoined the wizard.

"Stay !" cried the Missionary, feeling disconcerted at the prospect of losing his last chance, according to the Obeah man's account. "What is become of Combah ?"

"You have burnt his face, and perhaps blinded him for ever !" said the prophet.

"Perhaps !" said Roland, echoing the word. "You, who are a prophet, should say positively what is to become of him."

"I could say it. I can tell you he will never recover the use of his eyes."

"Where is he ?" demanded the Missionary.

“ He sits beside a spring of cool water, bathing his face.”

“ Where then is your boat ?” said Roland. “ Combah cannot make use of it.”

“ He cannot,” rejoined the prophet ; “ nor can you, I fear. Cuffy is gone, Combah is helpless and desperate, and I have business in hand. I cannot attend you beyond the shore. If you can manage the boat alone—I will conduct you to it : if not, I will yet place you in a safe abode till morning—till tomorrow night ; when I will find you a party sufficient to carry you to Cuba, or to St Domingo.”

“ What is your business that you cannot go with me ?” demanded Roland. “ Come with me, if you would fain save me. I will not trust myself with runaway Negroes and rebels.”

“ They shall be Christians,” replied the wizard ; “ some of your own making.”

“ Ah ! nonsense !” rejoined the preacher. “ They are brute beasts—guided solely by their passions : would I had never known or seen them !”

“ If you remain at large,” continued the Obeah man, as if not attending to the last remark, “ you will be taken up for murder. You are accused besides of preaching sedition—of conspiring to carry off Miss Guthrie. There are plenty ready to betray you, and Mr Fairfax can tell you a tale

respecting Mrs Guthrie—of the fire on that night when he last quitted the island—of violence.”

“Hush! hush!” said Roland in an agony.  
“Mrs Guthrie is dying.”

“But she will know all.”

“How?” cried he again.

“Michal—Michal can tell her.”

“Michal? Who, what? How came that man? Hamel, I saw a strange Negro—that man of whom you spoke to me—him whom I made free: what does he there at Mr Guthrie’s?”

The Missionary spoke in a voice half choked with the thirst arising from his anxiety; and the Obeah man, too sensible of the agonies which reached the mind of his rival, could hardly conceal the triumph he felt at the conviction of his distress:

“You thought him dead! You have no chance of safety,” said he, in reply to Roland’s question, “but in flight. Mr Fairfax is my friend; him I will serve. There shall be no rebellion; master Roland, you have gone too far! I hate the white men—I abhor them! I wish——But that is no matter.”

“That man!” continued Roland, interrupting him: “that black man with the blear eyes!”

“Beware of him!” said Hamel.

“It is long since I saw him, Hamel!”

“Aye, four years! You laugh at me and at my prophecies,” continued the wizard; “I can tell you, however, that your existence hangs on a thread. You must be ruled by me, or you are lost.”

“Well,” said the Missionary with a sigh, “what do you counsel? It seems my own efforts must soon fail.”

“Had you consented to make use of the boat when I offered it to you,” observed the conjurer, “I had persuaded even Combah to attend you; and you had your boy. That chance of escape is lost for to-night. You must let me put you in a Negro hut till the morning, perhaps till tomorrow night; or you may come to my cave. I will conceal you. Combah has access there, but he is blind—it will be many days before he is able to see at all.”

“Well, be it so,” said the preacher;—“but hear me, Hamel: you have some secrets—some power—and may perhaps be able to bring about some strange things. Put me in possession of Joanna. What is she to you? You have outlived the age of love. You may have never known what it is to love. You cannot perhaps appreciate the divine sentiments I feel towards that beautiful white girl. But, Hamel, I really adore her; and the less my chance of obtaining her becomes, the more ungovernable is the passion I feel to be loved by her.”

The wizard laughed in his heart at the mad folly of the enamoured wretch : but he bid the preacher think of his idol no more.

“ There are other women,” said he : “ surely you have enough in your own country, and as many as you please in this. Think rather of your safety. Think of your difficulties, dangers ; of Fairfax and Mrs Guthrie ; of your participating in the Obeah cup, of your sermons, of the innocent blood you have shed, of your league with Combah. Think of a halter rather than of love. Think of your religion—of your character.”

“ Alas, alas !” said the preacher, interrupting him again ; “ I can think of nothing but Joanna—of nothing but the happiness that awaits Mr Fairfax. If she is to be his, I care not what becomes of me.”

“ Cha, cha !” rejoined the Negro. “ Life is uncertain, and fortune may present you with opportunities of success when least expected. Remember the night of the fire. But here is a hut in which you may pass the remainder of the night, and a black woman who will take care of you. Master Roland, though she is young, as you see, and I am old, she is my wife ; and I will answer for her that you need fear no treachery here.”

The Missionary had been led by a roundabout way from the course he had first taken towards

the sea-shore, and now found himself at the house of a Negress, belonging to a small proprietor, a neighbour of Mr Guthrie's. The woman was as black as pitch, as Roland could distinguish by the light of a piece of candle-wood which she kindled from the still glowing embers of a fire in the middle of the floor ; but she was young, and amongst Blacks was considered very handsome ; and she received the preacher with great civility and good humour. The Obeah man took his horse, which he turned out in a piece of guinea grass, and having seen his guest provided with a trash matrass, left him, with a promise to return by daylight, and to secure him a passage, in some mode or other, from the island by the following night.

The Missionary was no sooner left alone with the black dame, than the latter asked him if he was hungry or thirsty, and offered him all she had to offer in the shape of refreshments ; but he was not disposed to eat. He threw himself on the matrass beside the embers, whose smoke kept the musquitos in some sort of subjection, and fell into a disturbed and unhealthy slumber ; muttering, between whiles, something of death and paradise—then of judgment—and lastly of Jael and Sisera.

The black woman had squatted herself on the opposite side of the fire for some time ; but finding

that Roland still slept, although in so unsettled a manner, she retired to her own dormitory, an inner apartment, where she likewise fell fast asleep.

In the meantime, as the night waned, the Obeah man had returned to his majesty king Combah, whom he found venting his rage and grief in curses and vows of vengeance, and occasionally consoling himself with reflections on the mutability of human affairs, and the disgrace consequent on unsuccessful ambition: then dabbling his face with water, and holding it in the little pools which the rill formed in its course; then again bursting into a passion of execration, and vowing vengeance on the whole island for this one act of the religious Roland, committed by him solely in defence of his life.

The Obeah man was not dissatisfied, in one point of view, with the fate which Combah had thus brought on himself, as it put out of the question any farther proceedings, at least with regard to the king, in the matter of rebellion. By this means he could fulfil his wishes, and his engagements to Mr Fairfax. However, he would have preferred to dispatch his majesty to Cuba, or St Domingo, or anywhere out of harm's way, for the present, and to have got rid altogether of the Missionary, except that by holding him up to the Negroes in a ridiculous light, he exposed the pretensions of the zealot, and prevented his own

persuasion from falling altogether into contempt among the black population.

“Combah,” said he, “you must be carried to my hut at Belmont, if not to my cave, where all my arts, physical and magical, shall be employed to heal your eyes, and allay the burning inflammation in your face; but as the way is long, it might be as well to press the Missionary’s steed into the service for an hour or so. He can carry one, if not two Negroes, as well as any other white man’s horse; and whether Roland sleep or not, I can catch his beast without being overheard.”

“But where is Roland?” said the king. “You talk of his sleeping. Lead me to him, and let me kill him, or cut him as he has marked me. Let me be revenged on his false heart for his cruelty. Do, Hamel, I pray of you! I will make war for ever on the Christians! I will banish their religion from the country! I will burn them all!”

The Obeah man laughed. “Your power is gone, Combah; or at least, it is suspended till you recover your eyes. Wait here; I will fetch the horse; and keep this cloth over your face, that the moon may not shine on you, for that would make it impossible to cure your wounds.”

The king took the cloth, a piece of Osnaburgh



sheeting, or some such thing, which Hamel had brought from his young wife's abode ; but he was obliged to keep his face in the water still, to obtain at least a temporary relief. He counted the moments with much anxiety till Hamel's return, for the latter had found the horse not so easy to catch as he expected ; and having deposited the saddle and bridle in the hut, he was unable to secure the animal when once in his possession.

Liberty ! glorious liberty ! thought the horse.

The Negro thought the horse a vile, self-willed, obstinate brute, but that idea would not serve him at present.

" A bridle you shall have, master preacher," as he called him ; " though I go into the hut for it. But softly ! What do I hear ?" —

The Missionary had awaked, and was engaged in prayer loud and long, expressed with all the mouthing and ranting of the most passionate enthusiast : but as it would be impossible to detail the terms of his supplications, we shall only state that the occasion detained the Obeah man a good hour and a half before the Missionary—recollecting the black dame, who lay all the while as mute as a fish—had called to her to accompany him, and join her prayers with his.

" Black woman," said he, " mistress Hamel—or by what name shall I address you ? Negress !—sister in the spirit !—Canst thou so sleep while I

am agonized with passion? Come forth, mine hostess. The fire is not extinguished! Come forth, and let us endeavour to improve the occasion by pious exhortation."

The woman lay all this while as snug and silent as if she had been in her grave, and seemed still disposed to retain her taciturnity; but the preacher did not so much like his own company, and began groping his way towards the inner chamber, vociferating all the while texts from scripture, illustrative of his holy zeal.

"Holy Dunstan," said he at length, apostrophizing the spirit of that saint—"holy man, thou wert tempted by a beautiful devil. I cannot fear a black one. It was a white one tempted him and me too. And thou, too, fortunate Alvarez,\* for whose sake even Beelzebub was smitten with an amorous passion, as I have read in the days of my youth; thine was a white fair devil with flowing amber locks, and this, if a devil, is a woolly-headed one, and as black as Cocytus. Quashiba! mistress! are you dead?"

"I am not dead, and no more devil than yourself," said the dame in a whisper. "What do you make such a noise for?"

"Pardon me," replied the Missionary; "I spoke figuratively. You are no devil nor witch, but a good woman. Are you a Christian?"

\* Alluding to Cazotte's *Diabte Amoureux*.

“ Yes, master.”

“ Then come and pray. Join with me in supplication to the throne of mercy.”

“ What for?” said the Negress. “ Why must I beg *Garamighty* at this time of night? I want nothing. Please go lie down, and go to sleep.”

“ Alas, I cannot sleep,” said the Missionary. “ My brain burns, and I am oppressed with many sorrows! Oh conscience, conscience, I thought I had learned to still thee! Tell me, mistress—mammy, I should say—are you the only wife of Hamel?”

“ No, he has one more.”

“ Only one?”

Silence seemed to give consent.

“ Are you faithful to him?”

“ As faithful as he is to me.”

“ How old are you?”

“ The overseer’s book will tell; I believe I am near sixteen.”

“ Have you no white love—lover, I mean?”

“ No, none; and I want none. Go and sleep.”

“ And do you not think that Hamel is inconsiderate, to leave me here with you alone? Suppose I were to offer you any——”

“ No, no, master: go and say your prayers again.”

“ I tell you,” said the Missionary, “ I cannot pray alone. I would fain have your company beside the embers.”

Here the girl burst into a loud laugh, which disconcerted the preacher, who reproved her for her want of feeling and respect with an affectation of the most profound gravity ; but the more he argued, the more she laughed. They made such a noise between them, that Hamel took the opportunity of opening the door, which was only latched, and creeping into the hut on all fours, got off, unobserved, with the saddle as well as the bridle, and went to work again to catch the Spanish horse, as if indifferent to the interview or the dialogue which he had witnessed, wherein the preacher, as he thought, betrayed something like an inclination to gallantry.

The young dame still continued to laugh, although Roland had approached the bed in which she lay, and begged to know, in a voice rendered more croaking by an assumed tone of tenderness, the reason why she thus made a jest of him.

“ You are young,” continued he ; “ too young to be wilfully wicked ; and you are pretty. Give me your hand.”

The Missionary lifted up a musquito-net with which the bed was protected, and felt for the girl’s hand, although there was a sufficient light from the moon which shone into the chamber, to guide him in his search. Still the girl laughed, and Roland had almost plucked up courage enough to smile too, when he discovered, by the

aforesaid light, that there were two persons in the bed before him. Had Combah fired the pistol in his face, he could not have been more disagreeably surprised.

“ Mercy on me !” he cried with a deep sigh, letting go the musquito-net which he had still held in his hand. “ Peace be with you !—If you will not join me in prayer, at least allow me to pray for you.”

The girls laughed now, both of them, while Roland returned to his mattress, sadly put out of conceit at the issue of his adventure ; for his mind, being humbled afresh, gave way to the distressing anxieties and reminiscences which crowded on it, together with the fears which assailed him from all quarters. He no sooner closed his eyes, than his fancy presented to them a portrait or an effigy of himself suspended on a gibbet, while a rabble of Negroes hooted around him. It was not necessary that he should sleep to see this vision ; it was a waking dream which haunted him. Sometimes he pictured to himself the eternal gulph—the modern Tartarus—where he beheld the souls of his enemies, as he considered them, heaving on the waves of the fiery abyss, while he looked on complacently. The assurances of his faith had power to calm his soul as to any apprehensions of a future state, believing himself, as he did, elected, and inspired, and

emancipated from the power of the devil, who could only enthrall his mortal flesh in this world, and give it over to the Jack Ketch of the island. His immortal part gave him no concern, for that he considered safe. Nevertheless, he turned with horror from the vision of his dear flesh hanging between heaven and earth, and prayed most fervently to be excused such an unpleasant exhibition, preferring, as he expressed himself, to die of old age and a gradual decay, amid the consolations of faithful, affectionate, and pious relatives, leaving his character as a bright example to them and to all the partners in his religious belief. He persuaded himself that such an exit from this world would be more useful to mankind, and would tend more to promulgate and to recommend the infallible tenets of his persuasion; besides being so much less disagreeable than a public execution, or any violent death, though it were an apoplexy even, which he candidly owned he should prefer to being hanged by the neck. As he had again resolved himself into prayer, from which he had hitherto seldom failed to derive consolation, he gradually acquired confidence enough to enlarge his ideas and requests, and prayed now for a long life, and for Miss Joanna, and for riches and fame, and a triumph over his enemies; and began to disdain his black hostess

and her wizard of a husband ; and had actually resolved to sally forth and go home directly, before he recollected that his home was a heap of ruins, or rather that it had melted into thin air. This recollection brought back the conviction of his miserable situation, and satisfied him that he was a forlorn outcast as to the people of Jamaica, and that his best chance of escaping the evils which he dreaded, was to be found in abiding by the instruction of the Pagan, the necromancer Hamel. Yet even this idea brought with it an additional gloom, and so distracted him, as it mingled with his other recollections, that he could neither sleep nor even rest on his mattress. He called again for the company of his hostess, told her it was near morning, and begged of her to make a fire, and roast him some plantains ; besides, he was overcome with thirst, and wanted a draught of water.

The appeal to her hospitality was instantly obeyed by the black dame, who came out of her bed with no superabundance of clothes on her person, goodnaturedly displaying her white teeth as she smiled over the fire which she rekindled. She gave the Missionary a jug of cool water, and promised to prepare him a pot of coffee as she put the plantains down to roast. He in the meantime walked to the door of the hut, to breathe the fresh air, and avoid the smoke of the fire, as well

as to look for the dawn in the eastern sky, for which he was sadly impatient. There was no appearance yet of morning; but as the preacher gazed intently through the moonlight, he saw a figure of which we must give some account in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel,  
Hark in thine ear.

TEMPEST.

THE Missionary rubbed his eyes half-a-dozen times before he could make out the object which fixed his attention. It was, in fact, the majesty of the ex-king, mounted on the preacher's horse, and surmounted by the Osnaburgh cloth, or piece of sheet, which the magician had put over the singed and royal features of Brutchie Combah. The wizard walked on the farther side of the horse, so that he was invisible to Roland, who distinguished only the steed carrying its unaccountable burthen, which gleamed in the moonbeams, and surprised the Missionary into a belief of its being something supernatural. He never entertained a thought of its being his own horse, or of the figure being the Brutchie, but kept his eyes steady on the apparition until it vanished among the trees, more than half convinced that it

was a ghost, although he was doubtful of ghosts riding the highway. With footpad ghosts all the world is familiar, and ghostly cavaliers have been known to take the air in some of the German romances; but in spite of their great authority, the Missionary was confounded, and remained in mute astonishment for at least ten minutes after the spectre had vanished, when he returned into the hut, and sat down on his mattress to ruminate afresh on his unhappy condition.

“I am undone,” thought he, “at last, if I remain here among a disturbed and suspicious neighbourhood, where the mere burning of my house will bring the white population to inquire into the cause of such an event; where the officers of justice have been in pursuit of me, where the vengeance of Fairfax awaits me, and Mr Guthrie will soon discover his wrongs and persecute me.” It was in vain that the black woman exerted herself to keep up the spirits of her guest. Her cheerfulness, her desire to please and console him, only wrung his heart the more, and caused him now to reflect on his own moral worthlessness with a pang of more intolerable anguish. The day added little to his quiet, for as it began to dawn, he descried with new mortification the absence of his horse equipage, and next the absence of his horse, which evidently was not in the pasture where it had been turned out in the night.

“ Ah !” said he to himself, “ this is Hamel’s work. He has me now securely. He knows I cannot escape on foot under the burning sun of Jamaica. He means to await the reward which will be offered for my apprehension, and then he will deliver me up, and I shall die—he would not put me to death himself—he dared not ; but he has an enmity to me for my religion. He will expose me—humble—annihilate me ! Would to God I had never meddled with politics, revolutions, or any such trash ! My connexion with Combah has been my ruin. What can I do ? Mr Fairfax disguised himself as a Mulatto. Why should not I blacken my face, and try to make my escape as a Negro ? Yet whither can I go ? I cannot leave the island publicly, except as a pretended seaman. My name must be put up first in the secretary’s office : but had I been at sea in Hamel’s boat, I might have escaped in safety. Common humanity would induce the master of any ship to take me up and carry me, I care not where, from this island for ever. I was a fool to reject his offer, but perhaps he meant to deceive me. Yet he seems to possess a sort of sincerity. But why has he taken my horse, and my saddle too ? He must have taken that while I slept ; and for what purpose ?” He thought again of the apparition, and the idea which had so alarmed him recalled as speedily a portion of his

confidence. He divined aright that it was the Brutchie, either equipped to protect his burnt face from the night air, or dressed up to alarm any of the Negroes from interfering with him; and he made no doubt but he was on his road to the Obeah man's cave, among whose windings and mysterious retreats he might set at defiance the scrutiny of the whole island; and knowing how well the wizard was provisioned, he was no less satisfied of his capability to endure any siege. Besides, he had always an escape from the Devil's Gully, where he doubted not the Obeah man could find his way, notwithstanding his declarations respecting that horrible pass. "If Hamel," thought he, "were really sincere, no place would be so fitting for him until the hue and cry were over." Combah's blindness rendered him incapable of revenge of any kind; nay, he would be at the preacher's mercy; and the Obeah man was no less interested than himself in casting a veil over all the transactions which had occurred of late, and of keeping, as he began to persuade himself, even him (Roland) from being given up to the authorities.

Being convinced of all this, he set about consoling himself for the wretched night he had passed, by making a tolerable meal on the black dame's plantains and coffee; calculating meanwhile on the return of Hamel, and devising or

trying to devise some mode of disguise, by which he might get incognito to the wizard's cave; although he trembled in imagination at the thought of passing the Devil's Gully, the only approach to it with which he was acquainted. He found he must needs wait for the Obeah man, the only disguise which he could assume (that is, with which he could be accommodated) being some of the gear of Mrs Hamel, and that on a scale infinitely too small for his figure. Yet he tried on the feminine apparel, and set the two girls grinning again at the strange appearance which the clothes gave him; while, as the daylight increased, his apprehensions augmenting likewise, rendered the whole effect of his masquerade more and more ludicrous. At length the women left him to attend their own work, and locked him in the hut, hiding the key in a place where, they assured him, Hamel was accustomed to look for it.

While the Missionary had thus been awaiting the daylight here, the king was pursuing his course to the sunken bridge, with the Obeah man for his guide, and clad, as we have described him, in the Osnaburgh sheet. He arrived at the bridge just at the first dawn of day; for Hamel had lost much time, first in getting the horse, and secondly in mounting his majesty on it. He rode through the water, his lord chancellor walking by his side; but had no sooner reached the other

shore than he heard the trampling of a party of horsemen coming down from the eastward at a brisk pace. These were in fact some of the Surrey troop of cavalry, riding towards the scene of the fire, as the report of it had been spread abroad with great expedition, by emissaries dispatched in all directions from the town, at —— Bay, before it was discovered that the fire was accidental. These cavaliers werē coming along the road which Combah must of necessity take, except he turned to the right by the only other one which would lead him to Belmont. There was no time for deliberation. The wizard jumping up behind his monarch, put his hands around him to secure the reins, and stuck his heels into the palfrey's flanks to urge him forwards; but the horse was more than satisfied with one Negro, and determined not to carry two. He kicked a little; and what was worse, he turned restive, and began backing into the water again, just at the moment that the helmets appeared flashing in the pale moon-beams, at an angle of the road which led directly down to the bridge, distant from the horsemen not more than a hundred yards. The Obeah man dismounted as quickly as he had got up behind the king; seized the bridle, and led the horse again into the Belmont road, bidding the Brutchie ride away out of sight; while he himself darted into the bushes, and soon escaped

the chance of detection—from horsemen at least. The king, in a royal passion of rage and fear, pummelled the horse with his fists, and kicked him with his naked heels, till he flew with his utmost speed along the road to Belmont ; Combah being for the present so utterly blind, that he dared not attempt to direct him. But he had not escaped the observation of the troopers, who would not perhaps have noticed him, had it not been for the white cloth, which was too conspicuous and too uncommon an object to fail of exciting their attention. The horsemen set up a shout, and galloped after the ghost with as much speed as the Spanish horse could boast of ; and he, as much alarmed by the pursuit as his rider, scampered as if a devil bestrode him, and stopped not until he had carried the king directly up to Mr Fillbeer's piazza door, where he had been accustomed to halt.

Mr Fillbeer had passed as dismal a night as his religious brother Roland ; although his anxieties proceeded chiefly from temporal considerations, as he had found that his garrison at Belmont were worse than mutinous, being resolved to welcome their master, and open their gates to him the moment he should appear.

The fat man would only lose his revenue, his home, his authority, his respectability : but his life was at no risk, nor was his conscience bur-

thened with deep crimes. However, he could not sleep; and no sooner had the day dawned, than he was at his window, looking down the road which led to the town, expecting to see his enemy, Mr Fairfax, coming with the *posse comitatus* to summon him to surrender. It was at this very moment that king Combah on the Spanish horse met his view, racing away from a party of troopers, who came up with him in a few minutes after he had reached the piazza—in fact, before the attorney had been able to satisfy himself as to the identity of this extraordinary visitor, or could comprehend why he was mounted on Roland's beast, or why he was clad in this white sheet. Combah himself was in no little alarm, for he distinguished, by the clatter of the horses behind him, and the shouts of the riders, that they were fast gaining on him; and when the Spanish steed halted at the fat man's gate, his alarm was in nowise diminished by any knowledge of his situation, as he was so effectually blinded as to be unable to decide whether it was night or day. The first sound he heard that could inform him of the spot where the horse had thought fit to plant himself, was the voice of Mr Fillbeer, growling from the piazza—"Who the devil are you?"

The king remembered the voice, and recollected likewise how he had laughed in his heart at the



distress of the fat man the day before. This he thought was a judgment on himself, for he had his share of superstition; but the idea did not *help him to any answer: not a word could he utter.* He sat as silent on his horse as if he had been a real ghost waiting for the voice of the exorcist.

“Who the devil are you?” cried Fillbeer again, in a voice of thunder;—“what do you come here for, dressed up like a Jonkanoo Tom Fool? Speak, idiot, or I’ll blow your brains out.”

“Fire!” cried the Brutchie; “fire!”

The Brutchie actually wished himself dead: for what could he do? He was like Sampson in the hands of the Philistines, and felt assured that death in some shape awaited him, and must surprise him, at latest, in a few days. He disliked hanging as cordially as his vicar Roland, and cried out stoutly to the attorney to put him to death. Fillbeer was still more astonished, and being outraged at his impudence, put a gun deliberately out of the window:—it snapped.

“Try again,” said Combah; “fire—fire! you fat beast, fire!”

He heard the troopers coming nearer; and Fillbeer saw as well as heard them. He was bewildered: he cocked the gun again, and pulled the trigger. The gun hung fire for some time, but at last it went off. The horse wheeled round

in a fright, and scampered away, leaving Combah on the ground, lying flat and motionless on his back.

*The troopers, drawing their swords at this, rode up and surrounded the Brutchie, who fancied or feigned himself dead, although the fat man had taken care not to hit him, meaning solely to put his mettle to the test, and supposing him to be a delegate of Mr Fairfax, to scare him from the premises, and give his master a hint at the same time. But as the king lay apparently dead, and as the gun had hung fire, Fillbeer concluded he had missed his aim, and really dispatched the ghost.*

“He is shot in the face,” cried one of the troopers : “his eyes are blown out.”

“What did Mr Fillbeer shoot him for?” said another.

The Negroes came running up from their houses, and being unable to get a sight of the Brutchie, on account of the troopers who surrounded him, took for granted, as they heard this last question, that the attorney had shot their master, Mr Fairfax.

“Master Fairfax is shot! The overseer has killed him!”

A simultaneous shout was succeeded by as simultaneous a rush at the great house. Door, windows, piazza, bars, bolts, gave way as if it

had been the last day. The mob were all over the house in a minute; seized the ex-brewer, whom they nearly suffocated in their struggles to get at him, and, in spite of his bellowing remonstrances, pulled him out of the house by main force; some taking a leg, others an arm, (it required a score to carry his fat carcass) and others supporting his head. They bundled him through the door, and were going to hang him to a tree in the mill yard, but they thought his weight would break it. They then took him to the tree in which Combah had perched the day before, and a rope was actually round his neck before the troopers knew what was really the matter. They shouted in vain to the mob, who began to think that Fillbeer had employed them on the occasion, and were about to make a charge to rescue the attorney, when their attention and the purposes of all parties were arrested by the arrival of Mr Fairfax himself, and his friend Mr Guthrie. •

“ Massa da come ! massa da come ! ”

A lusty hurrah from the rear of the assailants confirmed the news; and that sound which fat Fillbeer had anticipated as the most hateful summons which his ears were ever to let into his brain (except that of the angel of death) proved, as occurs very frequently, the most welcome tidings he had ever listened to in his life. “ Massa

da come!" said the Negro who had tied the rope round the attorney's neck.

"Massa da come! Yander him tan!" (Yonder he stands.)

He did not wait to expostulate with the attorney, whom he and others had hoisted into the tree, but slipping down from it himself, left Mr Fillbeer with the rope round his neck, seated in a fork of it, habited as he had been found, in a long dressing gown of white cotton.

Meanwhile the Negroes had crowded round their young master, whom they were ready to devour with caresses and congratulations, and carried him in triumph to the house, where they seated him in the piazza, and greeted him as if he had really been a king. He received the same courtesies from the light-horsemen, with many of whom he was acquainted; while Mr Guthrie stated to them all (including the Negroes) the nature of the rights by which Mr Fairfax took possession of his patrimony; as well as that he really had had a power of attorney from Mr M'Grabbit to enter on all the other properties on which that gentleman had any claims as to possession, and likewise to transact all his affairs for him in the island.

As soon as this little explanation had taken place, an inquiry was naturally made for Mr Fillbeer, and the troopers were not a little curious

to know the particulars of the Brutchie's adventure; for by this time it was found, that the attorney had completely missed him, and that the singing of his face was attributable to a former misfortune.

Combah was sulky and silent; but Mr Fillbeer, still seated in the tree, to a branch of which the rope which encircled his neck was made fast, bawled out at intervals to be taken down; as he was fearful of turning giddy and falling into a suspension by the neck, unless some one came speedily to his assistance. It was in vain to look at him and hope to avoid tormenting him with a smile. His long lank locks stuck out (as if they were electrified with fear) like the quills of an angry porcupine: his gown was flying loose in the wind, and his under garment, which was a pair of drawers only, in addition to his shirt, was burst in two or three places, either with the hauling he had endured in being thus run away with and hoisted into the tree, or from the increase of fat which he had acquired since the purchase of these articles, which were probably sent out on commission, and not calculated for the fattest man in the Antilles. He had on a pair of slippers when he was thus borne aloft, but these had dropped off, and left his legs and feet bare. They were so loaded with fat that he might have shewn them against an elephant's.

One gentleman remarked, that all Barbadoes\* could not vie with them, or produce such another pair. The toes were scarcely visible, except at the very extremities; and they resembled two macaucas magnified by a solar microscope to the size which they presented. How was he to be got down? How got he there? Jack Ketch was obliged to mount to his assistance, and cut the rope, preparatory to his descent by a ladder, which he trod as some may imagine those elephants step who are taught to poise themselves on the slack rope. Once he missed his footing, and had certainly rolled over on his back but for the Negro who clambered to his assistance; for, being conscious of his own weight, he begged that no one else would encumber or strain the ladder. The last spoke but one actually broke with his load of mortality, and let him slip to the ground, striding, to save himself, across the ladder, where his legs and arms, stretched out at the four corners of his carcass, gave him the air of a turtle; or perhaps he as much resembled a wool-pack. He came to the ground with a rush which upset him, and he fell backwards into the arms of the Negroes, who carried him, by direction of Mr Fairfax, into the house, and into the room which he had occupied, where they seated him on his

\* Barbadoes is famous for big legs.

bed, puffing and blowing like a grampus on a shoal.

This lesson had been sufficient for him. The man of war was but too happy to make peace, and promised to vacate the premises in the course of the day ; thanking Mr Fairfax, though in rather a dogged way, for the salvation which he owed to his name—the name of master. Another minute, and he had breakfasted in Paradise ! He was too happy at his escape from the aforesaid place, to think, with the depth of feeling which he afterwards underwent, of the information which Mr Fairfax gave him respecting the power of attorney he had received from Mr M'Grabbit. For the present he was not superseded as to the other properties ; and having dressed, and eaten his breakfast, he packed up his clothes and his papers, and mounting his horse, turned his eyes for an instant to *the tree*, heaved a sigh, waved an adieu to the party, and rode off the estate.

## CHAPTER IX.

Have you not set mine honour at the stake, and baited it?

TWELFTH NIGHT.

THE next scene which the course of our narrative unavoidably leads us to, is the sick bed of Mrs Guthrie, attended by the patient and affectionate Michal, whose good fortune it had been (in the pursuit of a romantic love-affair, which had added little to her own happiness) to make a discovery respecting the cause of the melancholy which was conducting her mistress to the grave. She might still have kept her knowledge to herself; she might have suffered her mistress to pay the debt of Nature in ignorance of the real author of her death; she might have kept Joanna under the interdict of her mother, and Mr Fairfax had still been a bachelor for her, *more majorum*;—but the Quadroon's passion for that gentleman was too pure, and too disinterested, to



admit of her entertaining any selfish feeling for an instant. Indeed, no thought of such a feeling ever occurred to her, and she had used the very first moments of her return—that is, as soon as she had resumed her maiden weeds—to tell Mrs Guthrie every particular she had learned from the diving Duppie.

Her mistress, as the Quadroon related to Mr Fairfax, had heard all without making any remark. She remembered to have seen the Negro fly with her brutal assailant from the house. She remembered, likewise, the perfumed state of the person of this latter, corresponding with the still existing fancies of the Missionary on that point. Mr Fairfax she had never beheld since ; and Roland, to whom the Negro then belonged, had insinuated to her the confession of the Negro to himself, as to the outrage she had endured. The absence of Fairfax, who left the island very abruptly, gave a colour to the representations of the Missionary ; and he acquired a perfect mastery, for some time, over the mind of Mrs Guthrie by his apparent knowledge of this adventure ; which the lady, from considerations of the most distressing nature, wished to keep a secret from all the world, and more especially from her husband, whose peace of mind she thought it would destroy for ever. Roland still triumphed in his success, for no suspicion had ever attached to him,

he being, as the Duppie had related, disguised at the time even as to the colour of his complexion, and having, with no common ingenuity, perverted every circumstance of the affair to his own advantage, as to the future opinion which the lady should thenceforth entertain of him. There was but one other creature in the secret—the Duppie; and him the Missionary, after having long plotted against his life or liberty, had imagined to be dead, and persuaded the lady to the same belief.

The designs of Roland had first of all been confined to Mrs Guthrie; concluding, or hoping, that the captivity of her husband at the time would end in his death, the pirates generally disposing of their prisoners effectually. In such case, he would have proposed himself as the widow's husband, trusting to his secret, in case of need, to enforce his pretensions; but when, in a few days, Mr Guthrie returned, the Missionary decided on transferring his affections to her only child, then absent in England. Joanna was heiress to the property of her parents. He knew her, admired her, and being called home for a time on his own affairs, renewed his acquaintance with her in England; tried to poison her mind there respecting Fairfax; and came back to Jamaica, resolved to put in practice *all* means to obtain her as soon as she should arrive. He had found her wholly averse to him, and had therefore, as well as on

other accounts, concerted his scheme with Combah to bring about a rebellion, and seize the young lady by force. But when, during the absence of Mr Guthrie, he had cast his eyes on her whom he expected to be a widow, he had taken, as he thought, the most effectual way to ensure his pretensions to her. Had she then lost her husband, her days of mourning must have retarded his suit for many months—perhaps rendered it altogether abortive; others would have had time to interfere to supersede him. He chose a cruel and a fatal scheme, to render her happiness, at least her peace of mind, dependent on himself. Had Mr Guthrie been slain, who could successfully oppose him? How could the widow refuse him who was necessary to the establishment of her character, and the restoration of her tranquillity? He had employed therefore, in the dead of night, his Negro to fire the trash house, which was at the distance of near half a mile from the mansion, knowing that all the inmates would run to the fire, while he could at once take advantage of their absence and the lady's alarm. The result has been seen. The lady's happiness was ruined: her health had declined with it; while the monster who was the cause of all her misery, had even made a merit of his forbearance in keeping her secret, to urge his pretensions to her daughter. He had seen her wasting away from day to day,

almost from hour to hour; yet his hard heart had never known a pang of compunction or commiseration; nay, he looked forward to her death as the means of accelerating to Joanna the possession, in which he hoped to participate, of all her inheritance. This was the man who had pretended to give her the last consolations of the religion of which he boasted himself a *righteous*, an *elected* believer; and she had received that awful dispensation at his hands but a few hours before she was made acquainted with his real character, and with the obligation she owed to him for the years of misery which she had endured, and the untimely death which now hurried her to the grave. Yet it was still possible she might be deceived, and when, towards morning, she had awakened from the lethargic stupor in which her faculties had apparently been suspended, she expressed to Michal a wish to see Mr Roland without loss of time; determined to know, from the confession of his soul upon his face, if not from his lips, whether he were the villain he had been represented. It was then that Michal detailed to her mistress how Roland's house had been destroyed by fire the previous night, with the particulars of the alarm it had caused, and that the deputy-marhal had been after him with a warrant to apprehend him on a charge of murder.

A deep sigh acknowledged the impression

which this intelligence produced on the mind of Mrs Guthrie, accompanied by a hectic flushing, which was quickly followed by a death-like paleness.

“Where is he, Michal?” said the lady, after a pause. “Have they taken him?”

“No, mistress,” replied the soubrette. “He was here during the fire, and was terrified at the sight of the Negro who told of his behaviour—he who set fire to the trash-house. He came here to prove, if it should be required of him, all that he has declared.”

“I would see Roland,” said the lady again. “Where is he concealed?—and Fairfax?”

“Mr Fairfax is gone to take possession of Belmont. He was here last night, and Mr Guthrie is with him.”

“Thank heaven!” said the sick person. “But I would still see Mr Roland. Oh Joanna!—you may be happy! I wish to release her from her promise. But let us be assured by Roland’s self. Keep my secret, Michal!” A look from the Quadroon, beaming with intelligence and sympathy, satisfied and consoled her mistress.

“I have had,” said she, “a hard fate; one that I have scarce deserved, and at the hands of such a man as the Missionary—if he is guilty! Send for him, Michal.”

By this time intelligence arrived from Belmont,

of Mr Fairfax being peaceably in possession of his estate; of the resignation of Mr Fillbeer, after his narrow escape; and of the capture of the rebel Negro Combah, who had set himself up for the king of the island, and for whom a large reward had been offered: but of the Missionary nothing had transpired.

Michal, surrendering her post to Miss Joanna, who was now permitted to attend her dying mother, had set off to the place where the Missionary's house was used to stand, hoping to find some clue that might lead to the concealed abode of Roland. She found the premises as we have described them—little more than a heap of ashes. The stable, which was enclosed only with rails, was still standing, and some of the Missionary's tables and chairs, which had been flung into it, were lying scattered about, with two or three open trunks, displaying a farrago of old coats and waistcoats fluttering in the wind, together with a parcel of tracts and placards, with prints of a Negro on his knees in chains, which strewed the country for some score of yards to leeward. What seemed extraordinary to Michal was, that the coats and other habiliments should remain untouched, notwithstanding their being at the mercy of the numerous Negroes who had been to visit the fire. But this surprise on the part of the Quadroon, gave way to the evidence she soon

discovered, of Hamel, or some such person, having affixed his *taboo* on the stable, in the shape of a glass bottle hung up at one corner, a bunch of chickens' feathers at another, and a large toad impaled against a post at the third. None but Christians would dare to encounter the anathemas condensed in these materials; and the Christians had too much reverence for the Missionary to meddle with his goods, or derive any profit from his misfortune. It was far from being generally known that the deputy-marshal had a warrant against him; and as Mr Roland could not be found since daylight, it was imagined by many whom curiosity led to the scene, that he must have perished in the flames. Michal was however better informed on the subject, as she had seen the pious man at Mr Guthrie's door whilst his own house was in flames. She was well aware of Mr Roland's existence, and thought, with sufficient reason, that the Obeah man could give the best account of him, tacitly making up her mind to go to the cave in case she should hear nothing of him in the meantime; for she felt the very greatest interest in gratifying the wishes of Mrs Guthrie respecting the interview of which she was so desirous. Not that she entertained any hostility to Mr Roland, at least any wish to bring him to the scaffold, detestable and execrable as she thought him; but she was aware that her

mistress was dying, and she hoped to soften the asperity of her grief; and she was equally earnest in endeavouring to clear the character of Mr Fairfax from every tinge of suspicion. But the Missionary was neither to be found nor heard of. His boy Cuffy, who had returned from the mountains with Miss Rachel, said that his master had resolved to go to sea, after his return from Mr Guthrie's, in an open boat, with Hamel for his companion; and that he had run away to avoid being taken with him. Miss Rachel was as much at a loss as Michal; not daring to make any enquiries for Roland, lest they should lead to his detection and seizure by the officers of justice. She sat down on one of the buttresses which had supported the Missionary's dwelling, and gave vent to her grief, for a time, in a flood of tears; while Michal, at her request, collected some of the placards which were flying about, the tracts, and the old clothes, and placed them in the trunks for which Rachel had found the keys.

She was still lingering about the premises, endeavouring to console Rachel, and watching every face which curiosity attracted to the scene, when the black damsel, or rather dame—the Obeah man's wife—came, at the instigation of Roland (as it afterwards appeared) to reconnoitre the field, and to obtain, if possible, some information respecting the deputy-marshal, as well as to find



out Miss Rachel, if she were there, and get her to take possession of his clothes, and bring them to the Negro woman's hut, if occasion should offer; and in case Rachel were not there, she was to seek her at her mother's, according to the direction which Roland had given her. The Negro woman quickly found the object of her search, suspecting, by her tears, that she must have been particularly interested in the fire, and the fate of him whose house had been the prey of it. She quickly related to her that she was the mistress of Roland's secret, and could lead her to the abode where he had found refuge during the night, and where he was in fact concealed at this moment. The Mulatto woman arose immediately to attend her guide, but not before she had confessed to Michal the intelligence which she had received, and supplicated her not to take any measures which could involve the Missionary in farther trouble.

All this poor Michal promised, bargaining only that Mr Roland should attend to the last request of Mrs Guthrie; after which she would assist in any way to help him in his escape from the island. It was agreed that they should follow the Negress in company together.

Meanwhile, Mr Roland had no sooner dispatched one of the women to whose care he had been left, than he, with his natural inconstancy, prevailed on the other, a frisky lass, to disguise

and lead him to the Obeah man's hut at Belmont, as his mind was bent on finding a security among the caverns which Hamel frequented. The Negro girl dressed him up in an Osnaburgh frock ; put a hat made of grass on his head ; tied up the lower part of his face in a silk handkerchief, as if he had a sore mouth ; and with a piece of charcoal made his hands and the upper part of his physiognomy of one colour—all of the same complexion as his black eye.

Thus disguised, he sallied forth from the hut, conducted by the Negress, who absented herself from her work at her own risk. He was armed with his pistol, and brandished a good cudgel in his right hand. They had to cross the cane pieces in front of Mr Guthrie's house, in order to reach the road which led to the sunken bridge ; there being no other place to cross the rivulet, except by going a mile below, where it disembogued into the sea. The black girl knew, of course, the hut of the Obeah man, as well as the little cave above it. The entrance to the subterranean abode was known but to very few persons, and those only dared to enter it in company with Hamel, after they had summoned him by blowing a note on the conch-shell we have before noticed. But in this instance they had not the good fortune to arrive at the conch. As they crossed the interval in the cane pieces beforementioned, the Negress

espied the deputy-marshal, as she rightly suspected, sitting on his steed beneath a tamarind tree, directly in their way. She communicated her discovery to Roland; urging him to put a good face on the matter, and walk boldly past; but the Missionary's heart failed him. He could not help sidling away gradually; not towards the sea, which would lead him to the town, and the haunts of many men, but towards the house of Mr Guthrie, which stood on his right hand. The minister of the law had observed him and his attendant, but without the least suspicion of his identity from first to last; but observing that the pair of Negroes, as he took them to be, had changed their course on seeing him, he conjectured they avoided him for fear of being questioned respecting Roland, knowing how loth all Negroes are to give any account of a culprit which may be the cause of bringing him into mischief. So, seeing that they still kept hauling off—to use a sea phrase—he weighed his anchor, and set his topsails to come up with them, increasing his pace the nearer he approached, as he distinguished the more certainly that they were intent on keeping out of his way.

Roland concluded he was known. At that moment he would have given his revèrsion of paradise to have been again in the Negro hut, or in the cave of Hamel, or on the ocean in a

storm, a prisoner in a privateer, a jack tar fighting the enemy. The fangs of the law had more horrors for him than the clutches of Satan himself. He trembled from head to foot; redoubled his pace, and drew near, with long and hurried strides, to the dwelling of Mr Guthrie; the abode whose sanctuary he had violated—whose mistress he had rendered miserable.

Yet what was to be done? The deputy-marshal was determined to come up with him; and by this time he had got so near the house, that he must either enter it, or turn away from it altogether, and become at once the prey of the catch-pole! A drowning man catches at straws. Despair encouraged him. He hastened up the piazza steps as the marshal galloped towards him, and ran for protection into the very chamber of Mrs Guthrie—the scene of his crime—now, at least, the scene of something like his expiation. He bolted the door after him, before Joanna, who was seated by the bedside, had time to address him; threw down his hat, and pulled the handkerchief from his face, clasped his hands together, and fell flat upon the floor.

“Save me! save me! Forgive me!” cried he; “Save me from an ignominious death! Oh God! Oh God! Miss Joanna, save me!”

“Gracious heaven,” said Joanna in amazement, “it is Mr Roland’s voice!”

Her mother looked from her bed on the hideous figure before her, more astonished than her daughter at the black face of Roland ; while the Missionary, crawling towards her on his knees, implored her protection in the most abject terms.

“ Save me, spare me, forgive me ! I am guilty, but save my life !—I will atone for all !—I will be your slave ! Imprison—beat me, brand me !—I will worship my deliverer !—Mr Fairfax is innocent !—Would you shed my blood ?—Would you seek my death—the death of a sinner ? Let me live to make atonement, to make my peace with heaven, to redeem my soul from the gates of hell, from the lake of brimstone—the level lake, the burning billows of sulphur and pitch !”

There was a noise as of one trying to enter the room. The Missionary’s blackened features assumed the character of a more ghastly horror. He felt for his weapon to destroy himself, but the incumbrance of his frock prevented, or delayed, his getting at it. Still he was on his knees, exclaiming—“ Is there no mercy,”—while his victim, to whom he addressed himself, alarmed at his figure and speech, and already on the verge of the grave, cast on him a last look of pity, and motioned with her finger to Joanna to open the door.

The Missionary sank again on the ground, but quickly recovering himself, ran to prevent the

young lady from complying with the direction of her mother. He was, however, too late. The door was opened, and Michal made her appearance in time to stop the Missionary's hand from discharging the pistol through his own head in the presence of the dying woman and her daughter. The noise of his harangue, as well as the presence of the Negress, had brought the house servants to the door. The deputy-marshal too, acquainted, during her agitation, by the guide of Roland, that it was himself, sent in to claim his prisoner. Mrs Guthrie had breathed her last before he attended to the suggestion of Michal, and Roland hurried out of the window into the piazza, whence he leaped to the garden below. The marshal was on the look out, having summoned the servants to assist him. He caught a glimpse of his prey, and spurred his horse after him; while Roland drew forth his pistol and bid him defiance; but the man of war had no fear—or overcame it. He rode at him, and coming in contact with the Missionary, tumbled him headlong down with a blow of his staff, and springing from his horse, disarmed, handcuffed, and led him off in triumph to the prison at — Bay.

## CHAPTER X.

Oh! 'tis a cruel sentence, whether it  
In heaven for me or in earth be writ.

FAITHFUL SHEPHERD.

THE news of Mrs Guthrie's death was speedily conveyed to Belmont, where Mr Fairfax and his ancient friend, were preparing to celebrate his return to his paternal domains, in company with those of his neighbours whom courtesy or curiosity had brought to the scene of Mr Fillbeer's disgrace. Mr Guthrie of course returned with the messenger who brought the news, lamenting bitterly the hard fate which had deprived him, first of his wife's affections, and lastly of herself, before he could reclaim them; and commiserating, at the same time, the long sufferings she had endured, from what had appeared always to him, a preposterous, if not a capricious melancholy.

His opinion on the subject was not much improved when Michal put a letter into his hands,

which her mistress, anticipating her end, had given to her charge some days before, to be delivered after her death, conjuring him never to inquire into the cause of her chagrin, or the malady which would prove fatal to her, but to assure himself that she was his fond and faithful wife, who had never loved any one but himself, and now consigned her daughter to his constant and affectionate care.

She had expressed, by word of mouth, the same wishes to Joanna; and bid her tell Mr Fairfax to use a similar forbearance if ever there should arise a question on the subject. The old gentleman was contented, at least for the present, to abide by her instructions; and he grieved not the less for her untimely fate, and the loss he had sustained, when he heard of the defeat and imprisonment of the Missionary Mr Roland.

“*Una dies,*” said he, “*aliquando parens—aliquando noverca est.* The attorney overthrown, and the hypocrite unmasked and secured; the son of my old friend reinstated in his mansion and rights—But the wife of my bosom—the partner of all my past happiness—is gone for ever! For ever! That dreadful conviction, for ever! strikes on one’s heart as if it were the signal gun for one’s own execution! She will never come again!—Never, never! The joy of heart! Ah! that has been long gone, poor



thing ! The smiles of innocence, of affection, of rapture !—Ah, my God ! Can I forget when Joanna was born ? How proud she was of her, how grateful, how affectionate, and how beautiful she looked ! And now she is dead—a cold insensible corpse ! Yet she is beautiful still ! Dry your tears, Joanna—and you, Michal.—Would it had been my fate, rather than hers ! But we shall meet again, all of us—aye in a better world—for there is little use in this as far as I can understand it—except—except—except we can make those happy who depend on us for happiness, and a great many more too. God’s will be done ! I confess my ignorance : I know nothing of this world, and but little of any other : I had almost said less of any other. But we are born to suffer ; that is evident : and why may we not die to be happy ? Who knows ? The books say so—some of them—and I think it really possible. Thank heaven ! I have still my daughter left. You, Joanna, shall console me for my loss ! Weep not, my child. You are young, and shall find consolation, as I did. Bear with me ;—and you, Michal ! We all owe God a death. You have lost a kind mistress, but I will do my best to supply her place to you, and so will Joanna.”

Thus sighing, and then consoling the mourners, then mourning himself, the veteran betrayed, without designing it perhaps, the sense he en-

tertaind of his loss, together with some little sparks of his religious and philosophical fantasies ; and the night found him still exhorting his daughter, from time to time, to restrain the tears which his conversation as often recalled when he spoke of the amiable qualities, and the personal charms, of her whom he had on the morrow to consign to the earth. Let us leave him for the present, and give some account of the wizard Hamel, who sprang into the bushes between the sunken bridge and Belmont house, at the moment that the light horsemen were in pursuit of the dethroned monarch, the Brutchie Combah.

Hamel belonged to the estate of Mr Fairfax ; and the king was too blind at present to see or make any appeal to him, except he should give him warning, by his voice, of his being present ; consequently he had little or nothing to fear. He allowed the troopers to pass, and then altering merely the position of his hat on his head, returned to the road, and followed them as quickly as his legs would carry him ; but not in time to see the scene between Fillbeer and the ghost. He was overtaken by Mr Fairfax and his companion, in whose rear he arrived before the house at that critical moment when the attorney was seated on a branch of the tree, with a few fathoms of rope made fast to his throat. He was himself too much out of breath with running to announce

his master, and it would not have caused him to shed many tears if, by any precipitation, the fat man had been fairly launched into the air; for he abhorred him. The attorney was no favourite with any one on the estate, but Hamel held him in utter detestation on many accounts, chiefly for having punished and insulted him at the same time for some remissness in his duty as a watchman, when a sheep had been lost from his domain—stolen, as it was thought, but afterwards discovered to have been struck by lightning. It is not confessing too much on the part of the Obeah man, to acknowledge that he enjoyed the agony of Fillbeer, and would have kept him for an hour—a day—a week—in the situation in which he saw him; nay, he made his way to the foot of the gallows, and taunted him with his affected pity.

“It is but dying, master attorney,” said he. “You see how the Negroes love you. I’m sorry for you, master Fillbeer; perhaps they won’t hang you yet. I am too old, or I would climb the tree and cut you down.”

Fillbeer had been too terrified to pay any particular attention to what he said, though he was not insensible to it at the moment; but Hamel, to make more sure of his revenge, had anticipated the retreat of the man of fat, and waylaid him (although he was thus obliged to desert his sovereign for the time) in a narrow pass through

which his road lay to the upper estate, where he doffed his hat at the ex-brewer's approach, and wished him good bye, with many thanks for all favours.

Humbled as the attorney felt by his disgrace and defeat, as well as his expulsion from the estate which he had threatened to keep by force, his fears had yet so far given way to his feeling of present security, as to admit of his rage re-kindling at this shew of insult. His pale face was again reddened with passion; his cheeks swelled like the gourd of Jonas; and he gnashed his three teeth together as an alligator clashes his flytrap.

"Accursed villain!" cried he; "you are that dabbler in spells and Obeah, who caused the turkies to lay rotten eggs, and the chickens to have the pip. D—n you! I'll pheeze you, rascal! You shall grace a gibbet yet."

"Thankye, master. Master's too kind—master likes hanging himself. He grease the gibbet well."

"Scoundrel, do you mock me!" said Fillbeer, riding up as if to strike him with his whip. "It is you, you black monster, who bewitch the cows, is it?—who cause abortions among the women—who make your fellow-creatures eat dirt?"

"Dirt!" said the Obeah man, emphatically—"dirt, master Fillbeer? It is such as you and

preaching Roland who make my countrymen eat dirt. Who brought us from Africa? Who made slaves of us? Who treated—and treat us still—as the dirt they buy and sell? And while they affect to be for making us free, and for saving our *souls*, are cramming us with dirt, and trash, and filthy foolish lies?”

“Do you call my religion dirt?” said Fillbeer, affecting a solemnity of look and manner. “May the devil confound your impudence; d—n you, sir; d—n you, Hamel; d—n your mother and your father, your grandmother, and your great grandmother; and all her ancestry up to Noah!”

“Very well, master. Please to take care master does not damn his own grandmother’s ancestors. Have you all these curses in your religion?”

“Aye, sir; and you shall be cursed to the lowest pit of hell, dirt as you are, yourself.”

The Obeah man looked at his own small figure, compressing his frock to display its true dimensions, and then extended his arms in a sort of half circle, as if to illustrate that of Fillbeer, who foamed at the mouth like a baited bull, and continued punching, with his fat heels, the ribs of his horse, to get him nearer the rock on which the wizard stood.

“I know,” said the latter, “we are all dust and dirt—but master is more dirt than I am; ten-

times, twenty times more dirt. If master please to go to hell too, when I go ——”

“I go to hell, sir!” said Fillbeer with a grin, which was suddenly exchanged for a look of inspiration, as he turned the whites of his eyes to heaven, and assumed a smile he could have fancied celestial. “No, sir, I shall mount——”

“I tell you, Mr Fillbeer,” replied Hamel, “you shall dismount, if you do not take care. You shall march tomorrow at this hour to the mountains, or down to the Bay; for master Fairfax shall turn you out of the estate you are going to, and take away from you all the power you have had. You shall flog no more Negroes; and you shall dismount now, if you do not take care—look at your saddle.”

Fillbeer's eyes were on the route of Mahomet, travelling through the sixth or seventh heaven; and while he was extasied in this fashion, he lost, or forgot, the equilibrium of his weight, which preponderating, though in a very trifling degree, dragged his saddle on one side of his horse's back. He of course, slipped with it, and both were past recovery at the moment he discovered his mistake. Finding himself going, he thrust out his left hand as a prop to bear him up against the rock on which Hamel stood. His right foot being consequently hoisted on to the back of the horse, who, long accustomed to carry four and

twenty stone (up to any hounds in the island) remained, fortunately for the rider, as motionless as those of Lysippus at Venice are at present. But the fat man could not recover himself, and beginning to doubt the stability of his nag under this uneven pressure, he was fain to ask assistance of the man he had been cursing.

“Hamel, you blackguard, help me up.”

The Obeah man laughed.

“Help me up, you idiot. Have you no bowels, no Christian feeling? Help me, Hamel, I beseech you. Will you let me fall to the ground? I shall be killed! Help me! stop my horse!”

The fat man rolled upon the ground, like a tame duck, after an awkward flight, alighting upon the earth, not being able to stop its course till it has performed a somerset or two. He lay at last flat on his back, gasping for breath to repeat his curses on Hamel, who stood calmly surveying him from the rock, without offering him any assistance. “It is a bad omen, master Fillbeer! Think of it: you have brought it on yourself. You teach the Negroes to sing psalms and preach; now learn something from a Negro in return. Learn to be master of your passion and your tongue. Are you fit to talk of righteousness, and election, and salvation from hell fire,—who are proud and vain, cruel, merciless, and passionate? Think you the Negroes will reverence or love

such a heap of flesh and fat as that which lies kicking before me? Who eats the dirt now?"

"Help me up, Hamel—I beg of you. You see I cannot stir!"

"I will not help you. You white men think us dogs till you want us. Help yourself. A time will come when you will pray in vain for life. Farewell! You have taught me to despise you—that is all I have learned from master Fillbeer. But I have given you a lesson from which you may derive some profit, if there is any glimmering of sense left in your dumpling of a carcase—so farewell."

The Obeah man descended from the rock, and hastened back to Belmont, where he found that Combah had been recognised by some of the Negroes, who had brought him, disfigured as he was, to the presence of Mr Guthrie and his friend Fairfax. He would, however, give no account of himself beyond this, that he was burnt with gunpowder, and that, as he could not see his accusers, he would speak no more. The surgeon of the estate was deputed to examine and dress his eyes, and a book-keeper, with a couple of Negroes, dispatched with him to the Bay, where he was immediately put in durance, while measures were taken to summon a sufficient number of magistrates and jurors to an especial sessions, for the purpose of trying him on the following day. He



heard all this without altering a muscle of his face, and calmly seated himself on a bench in the prison, merely asking to be allowed a draught of cool water, and to have permission to send for two children he had by a free woman whose residence he described; saying that, as he knew the buckras would kill him, he wished to give these (the children) a true account of the acts for which he was to be put to death.

This request was complied with: the children were sent for. He remained alone for some hours, reviewing his late conduct, and bracing up his nerves to endure the fate which he calculated on suffering, with firmness and propriety. In the midst of these and similar reflections, his ears were saluted with an accumulation of noises proceeding from an assemblage of various persons who were escorting or following the unfortunate Mr Roland to the same durance in which his former friend, his late antagonist, his present partner in affliction, was confined.

Nothing could be more discordant than the sounds which accompanied the approach of the Missionary. Some persons could not help laughing at his ridiculous figure and costume; others, especially his late hostess, Mrs Hamel, crying bitterly. Many black dames shed tears on his footsteps; for with these the preacher was a great favourite. He was always sweet, and neat, and

wondrous civil and polite, and very generous to them, as far as his slender means went; and then he preached for the fair sex, and told them of their rights—in this world and the next. They liked his religion extremely, and were very grateful to him on account of the consequence he gave them in their own estimation; a quality by no means despicable, although adulterated perhaps with a little vanity.

The Missionary no sooner entered the court of the prison, than he beheld the victim of ill-fated ambition, the ex-monarch Combah, seated on a bench, taking the air, with a green coco-nut in his hand, and a brown porous jug of water by his side. Roland groaned at the sight, and asked the officers, in a voice composed of sighs and murmurs, whether he was to be confined with this man, what the charge was on which he was consigned to a gaol, and who had committed him.

“The custos of the parish was the magistrate who had signed the warrant, and the charge on which he was imprisoned was twofold: murder, and conspiracy to excite rebellion. You are here for security,” continued the turnkey. “The custos will wait upon you to examine you, and confront you with those who have deposed against you here; or you shall be attended to the court-house, or to his own house.”

“ Here will do,” said the preacher. “ Keep me from the gaze of the rabble, and give me some water to cleanse my person, and provide me with a Negro to fetch my clothes. There was a woman followed me, weeping. She has the garments I took off, and she can also provide me with clean linen ; for in this dress I am too much cast down—but it is no matter.”

“ None whatever, sir,” said Combah, interposing. “ I take it we are in the same ship, master parson. We have the same wind and weather to encounter. We have no mercy to expect from men—white men !”

“ None !” replied the Missionary, with a fresh sigh—“ none !”

“ We should have taken to the boat,” continued Combah. “ We behaved like women and fools. We are justly punished.”

The Missionary cast a look of contempt, as well as commiseration, on his partner, which signified little to the king, as his majesty’s eyes were bound up ; but quickly relapsing into the grief excited by his own distresses, he gave way to the agony which oppressed him, and wept bitterly.

The king listened to his sobs for a long while in silence, despising the Missionary from the bottom of his heart ; but at length the royal patience was exhausted, and he gave vent to his feelings thus :

“ Master parson ! what would you think of me if I were to cry in that way ? And yet I am a captive through your means. If you had not disabled me, I had never fallen into the hands of the white men : certainly not alive.”

“ I fired,” replied Roland, “ in defence of my life—you know it ; you strove to kill me. It is you who are to blame for all—your own disaster and mine. You made me set fire to my house.”

“ For that matter,” rejoined the Brutchie, “ you are safe. You will be cleared of the conspiracy. They dare not kill you for that, and no one could prove it on you but Hamel and myself.”

“ What—what said you ?” cried the Missionary, looking up.

“ I say, master parson,” answered the Brutchie, “ I will not tell upon you.”

“ I will not trust you—but no matter.”

“ Then you are still and always a fool. Have not you a right to preach ? I tell you nothing can hurt you on that score,—get over the charge of murder.”

“ I am innocent—it was accident—the informer knows it was.”

“ Then what have you to fear—and why do you sit blubbering there ? What though you had told a thousand lies of Mr Fairfax ; they do not hang white men for that. The white men are afraid of you. I wish they were of me. Get yourself bailed out of prison by some of the other

preachers, and go away to America. You may begin the world again with all the knowledge you have gained by bad luck. I should be glad to change with you so far."

"How, so far?"

"So far, and no farther; I would not change anything else with you—neither my skin nor my condition—nor my resolution to die as I ought. Have you nothing to say to comfort me? You have preached often of death, when it was far away. Tell me now how I should face it; and how you will endure it, if the white men should contrive to make you guilty."

"Pshaw! Do not trouble me—you are the cause of all my calamity. If you had not sought to take my life, I might now have been on the sea, as independent as the waves themselves; I might have turned my back for ever on this hateful island, and all whom it concerns."

"There is no consolation here; you are making bad worse. But, if you have nothing more to say, at least wipe your eyes; stop your tears; do not disturb me with your womanish grief. We are here on a sort of equality, I own; for though I am a king, I am a prisoner like yourself; but that does not authorize you to torment me with sobbing and crying."

The preacher was struck with the assurance of the Brutchie, notwithstanding the extravagance of his own grief; however, he took a hint from his

majesty's behaviour, and endeavoured to suppress his emotion, while he washed the charcoal from his face and hands, and assumed a more appropriate dress, sent to him by one of his own fraternity—a brother Wesleyan—who, in common with all the inhabitants of the town, had been apprised of Roland's misfortune. Still he whined, and moaned, and whimpered, and sighed; while Combah, from time to time told him how he despised him, and would die with less reluctance to be relieved from the annoyance of his lamentations. His prayers no less vexed the king: everything he said or did seemed to Combah the result of a puerile and a contemptible cowardice; and at times he felt so enraged at the Missionary for thus wearying him, that he wished only for his eyes and the liberty of his hands, that he might seize him and dash out his brains against the prison wall. The Missionary however continued inconsolable.

## CHAPTER XI.

IT was nearly dark before the Obeah man, Hamel, ventured to approach the town of —, to reconnoitre the prison, and communicate if possible with his incarcerated ally, the Brutchie; or attempt anything for his companion of the Obeah cup—the distracted and bewildered Roland. He entertained but slender hopes for the first, on account of his blindness; but he was as anxious to save the preacher as one devil would be to assist another, where their mutual services tended to bring about the same end, the object which the wizard had long entertained—the subversion of the power and authority of the whites throughout the island. It is true this feeling of his had been somewhat neutralized by his sense of obligation to Mr Fairfax, but still a time might come. He would not willingly

part with so efficient an agent as Roland, who was exactly the character which Hamel would have sought or desired, to create a confusion in the island, and revenge him and his countrymen on their oppressors. He had a scheme which, if he could have written, might have been easily communicated to the preacher: but though Hamel could formerly write a little Arabic, he knew not a letter of Anglo-Saxon; nor did Roland comprehend a word of any other language, except Latin, and perhaps a sentence or two of bad Spanish. Hamel, however, was not long baffled on this account. He soon found a pious dame, whose daughter (a girl of ten years of age) had learned at the Missionary's school the art of inditing letters. The mother was delighted to shew the talents of her child, and highly interested in saving the precious life of the man of grace. The daughter was commissioned to obey Hamel's direction, but not in the presence of her mother. The wizard would have no witness. He took the child aside, and having furnished her with a piece of paper, and a pen and ink, dictated the following letter:—

MASTER PREACHER,—With the dagger contained in this paper the least wound will be fatal, for it is poisoned. You may obtain the key of the outer door, and you will find your own horse



ready for you on the hill at the church gate, and one beside it, to ensure your safety. Had you followed the advice of him who writes this, and staid where he left you, you had before now been in safety. If you take my advice, remember I shall be in waiting, three hours after sunset, at the prison gate; and when you hear the ship's bells in the harbour strike the hour, your gaoler will come to see you safe, and lock you up. Then is your time! Judge for yourself."

The letter was sealed, and secured in the lining of the Missionary's own coat, with which Rachel had by this time arrived from the hut of Mrs Hamel.

The dagger was a very small instrument contained in a sheath, and, being inclosed in the letter, escaped the knowledge of Rachel, who took it to be a file intended to extricate her master from bars and bolts. She knocked at the prison door, with the Missionary's clothes tied up in a bundle, and asked, with tears in her eyes, to be admitted to the speech of Roland, which, as he was only committed for examination, of course was not denied—the gaoler merely introducing her. She put the bundle into Roland's own hand, taking care that the letter, inclosing the dagger, should touch his fingers; although there was little risk on the subject, the gaoler

having locked up the brown nymph with the two prisoners, until she should knock to be let out.

“Roland!” she said in a whisper. “Dear master! Take courage! The other Missionaries will beg you off.” Then, seeing the gaoler was gone, —“Cannot you change clothes with me, and get away?”

Roland had not spirit to move a muscle; but the Brutchie, overhearing what had been said, and beginning to jeer him for his insensibility, he rose from the bench, and made an attempt to take off the borrowed coat he had on. The brown girl had also commenced disrobing, when another visitor was suddenly announced to the two prisoners, and the gaoler, entering with him, observed Rachel’s manœuvre, and civilly cautioned her against any such attempt as that she was engaged in.

It was a brother missionary who was thus introduced, and whom, at the moment, Roland wished in the third heaven, as his presence had marred one chance of escape, however desperate. He was a good and righteous man, who came to condole with Roland, and assist him in preparing for all that *could* happen to him, if guilty, and to keep up his spirits, and give him assurance of clearing his character, supposing him innocent. The stranger hoped the best, not being informed

of the particulars of Roland's crimes ; and wishing to console him by quoting an example of the universality of sorrow in this world, told him that his late friend and patroness, Mrs Guthrie, was dead that day, and that all her family were in the greatest affliction on account of her decease.

The poisoned dagger could not have inflicted a more painful wound to the bosom of Roland, than the news of this catastrophe. He had, at one time of his life, entertained a superstitious fancy, originating in a dream, that his own fate depended on the life of Mrs Guthrie ; and although in his hours of prosperity (if any such of his might so be called) he had thought lightly of this piece of superstition, yet the event, taking place at the moment of his own incarceration, on the day of his own most perilous lapse into the jaws of justice, brought with it the recollection of his former conceit, embittered by the conviction of his guilt. "She should have died hereafter." If the cause of her death were known, how many hearts would it harden against him—and would it not be known? Michal knew it: Hamel knew it: Mr Fairfax knew it; and the Negro who had fired the buildings seemed to have risen from the grave to tell of it.

The Missionary was absorbed in melancholy thought for some time after his ears had drank

the words of his brother ; but the Brutchie, who had listened to the intelligence, had no mind to let it pass without a remark.

“ Master Roland,” said he, “ you can have Miss Joanna now, since you have blinded me. If I had my eyes and my hands ! But no——I can assist you no more.”

“ Who is this ?” said the stranger. “ And how have you blinded him, Mr Roland ?”

“ In self-defence,” replied Combah. “ We were friends, and we quarrelled. I tried to chop him, and am justly served ; but master Roland has no business here : he is innocent as a child. He is silent because he grieves for the lady who you say was so kind to him.”

“ How were you friends ?” demanded the stranger again.

“ Oh ! we were like the cotton-tree and the fig-tree,” answered the king : “ we were bound together. The Missionary was the fig-tree, and has hugged me to death. Take him away, master, if you please. He has no business to die yet : he is not fit to die.”

“ What is he accused of ?” said the stranger, as if regardless of this remark.

“ Only murdering a child,” replied the king. “ He meant, so Hamel says, to kill a Negro man : you must forgive him for that. What is a Negro, master parson ? No more than a hog, or a dog ;

not so much as a horse: and he is accused of setting up rebellion; but I can clear him of that."

"How so? You are a prisoner yourself on that score."

"Yes, but he did no good: we should have been better without him. Take him away, if you can."

"Alas, I cannot take him but by a course of law. But tell me, Roland, does this man say true?"

"Demand of me nothing," replied Roland. "There are ears to hear us in all directions. When will Mrs Guthrie be buried?—Tomorrow, I suppose—and the rector of the parish will perform the ceremony. If you will come again, and pray with us, you may perhaps console us, for we are very miserable."

"Why miserable?" said the Brutchie.

"If you are innocent," observed the stranger, "why do you grieve and weep? This is but a trifling casualty. Bonds are the inheritance of every true Christian. Cheer up, Mr Roland. Let not your soul be cast down. The righteous shall flourish, and virtue is rewarded even in this world."

Rachel was seated during this dialogue by the side of her master; and while the tears ran down her brown cheeks, she had taken his hand, which she held affectionately in her own, and now

pressed to her lips. It was dark, or at least the little glimmering of twilight did not suffice to betray this action to the stranger; but the tender pressure, and the tears which he felt bedew his hand, acted on Roland's feelings so powerfully, in conjunction with the moral remarks of his brother Missionary, that he again relapsed into a passion of grief, wringing his hands, and even tearing his hair, while he walked up and down the prison, more like a bedlamite than a Christian martyr; cursing his folly and his hard fate.

"Talk not to me of comfort," said he to the stranger. "I know the *ferocity* of my enemies; I know they will strain every point to bring me to the scaffold. The Negro evidence, thank God, is nought: that is, the evidence of slaves; but Fairfax saw me—heard me; and who knows but they will take the evidence of slaves, and admit it to confound one whom they call evangelical, and hate on that account? Oh, they will hang me if they can! I thank you, brother, for your good-will. Come again tomorrow. I have not yet been examined or confronted with any accusers; when I have faced them, I have yet to come before a jury. Leave me now."

"No, Mr Roland," replied the stranger, "I will not leave you in this temper of mind. Let me rather stay and pray with you."

"I am not really in the vein," rejoined Roland.

“ Leave me, I beseech you ! This poor girl will be within hearing of the prison. Will you not, Rachel ? She will bring to you my wishes. Let me not detain you now.”

The turnkey came to tell Rachel at this moment that she must retire ; and the stranger walked away with her, still pressing upon Roland his reluctance to leave him, and conjuring him to resist the temptations of Satan : but the preacher was resolute. He wished to examine the contents of Rachel’s bundle.

No sooner was he alone with the Brutchie, than he felt into the lining of his coat, and drew from it the wizard’s letter. It was too dark to allow of his reading ; but he could, without difficulty, discover that it was a dagger which the letter enclosed. He called to the turnkey, who at his request furnished him with a light in a small glass shade, and left him again for the present to the society of Combah ; telling him, as he went away, that he should come again at nine o’clock, to furnish him with food if he desired it, and remove the Negro to a separate apartment for the night.

Roland read the letter, and examined the dagger with a suspicious eye, congratulating himself that he had not felt the point of it in the dark ; a circumstance that might have been fatal to him. Still it was a satisfaction to have the means of

death, to avoid a public execution; and yet again this very reflection seemed to sink his soul into the earth. He dared not die, he dared not kill himself, although the point of the dagger, the prick of a pin, would effect his death.

“Oh, the horror of yielding up one’s breath, of feeling one’s heart cease to beat—of falling into nought, or worse than nought!”

He drew the dagger again from the sheath; looked on its point darkened with a brown and gummy sort of varnish; replaced it in silence, and put it in his pocket—not that of the coat he had on, for he was literally afraid of having such a terrible weapon on his person—but into the pocket of his own coat, which he hung on a nail projecting from the wall, that he might re-peruse the letter at his ease.

The Brutchie heard the rumpling of the paper, and speedily conjectured what it was. “A letter from your friend of the Obeah cup, master preacher? Tell it me. Hamel has not forgotten us. But he can do nought for me, blinded by my own folly. Yet if I were at liberty, I might again recover my sight. The doctor at Belmont is a good man. He has cured me of all pain, and he promised me, now I remember, that he would come and dress my eyes and my face again to-night. Yet it is of no use. The justices and the jury will kill me at once. I wish they had left



me the means of putting an end to myself and my troubles. But what says Hamel?"

A new idea burst on the Missionary's mind at the second perusal of the letter, and at the remark of Combah respecting his wish to destroy himself; and he was loth to answer the king's interrogatory until he had considered the effect the letter would be likely to produce on him. This idea was—to get the Brutchie to use the weapon on the turnkey, as he (Roland) was unwilling himself to shed more blood, or to commit any crimes he could avoid; and he did not consider it so criminal, we may suppose, to compass the gaoler's death as to be his executioner—certainly not so very disagreeable. But how to do it? Combah could not read, even if he could see. He was desperate, reckless of life; and might be induced to take for granted whatever Roland should tell him as to the contents of the letter. But if he should doubt his reading, if he should hesitate, the dagger might be used to rid him of both. The death of the turnkey might be attributed to Combah, and *he* might appear to have committed suicide. His blood curdled at the thought: yet something must be done, if possible. His conscience told him what was murder; what risk he incurred by taking his trial; the infamy even of an examination, such as his might be;—a participator in the filthy ceremony of Obeah—leagued with a Pagan

and an apostate; an incendiary himself—a traitor—a rebel—a——. Yet he could not again shed blood: he dared not, even to escape from the almost certain prospect of death. He would have had the gaoler intimidated into the surrender of the keys, and he sighed to think that Combah lacked the use of his eyes; for *he* would have had no scruples, and would have made sure work; and then they might have escaped together,—or himself might have escaped under cover of the Brutchie's desperation.

The king had become impatient for the letter.

“Brutchie,” said the Missionary in a low voice, “here is a terrible letter from Hamel. He says you are condemned already to be dragged to the gallows.”

“No, no, parson—he does not say so. Do not lie. He knows better.”

“But he does say so, and has sent—hush! Combah!”

His voice sunk into a whisper, and from that into a sort of sepulchral croak.

“He has sent you a poisoned dagger.”

“What for?” said the Brutchie, calmly.

“To stab the gaoler.”

Had the Missionary seen his own features as he uttered these last words, he had gone wild with horror at the sight; or sunk into the earth with shame and apprehension, had the Brutchie seen them; but as the king was blind, he merely

remarked that Hamel should have commissioned him (the Missionary) to do the deed; "for," said he, "I cannot escape, and I cannot see to strike the blow."

"A scratch will suffice," replied the preacher; "the dagger is poisoned."

"Poisoned or not poisoned, you can see to do it: you are not manacled. Look at these chains. Free me from these, and I might hope. Give me the dagger, master Roland."

"No," replied the Missionary, "except you will engage to do what is necessary. When the gaoler comes to lock you up for the night, Hamel will be ready, at nine o'clock. He will be waiting for us both, with horses."

"Where are the horses?"

"By the church gate."

"And where is he?"

"He will be just outside the door of the courtyard."

"Had I my eyes," said the king, "I would smite the gaoler to the earth. Roland, you must do it."

"No, Brutchie, it is your business: 'tis you that are condemned."

"What!" said the king again; "am I condemned without being heard? Is this the white man's law? Oh, Roland, you are cheating me—I know better."

“ Well but,” replied Roland, “ you are already judged in their minds ; you have no chance of escape. They know the evidence they have against you. They have got witnesses without end, from the multitude that assembled yonder at Mr M’——n’s plantation.”

“ The same witnesses heard you preach,” master Roland ; “ they know what you meant. I tell you again, you are in the same danger as myself. But I know your scheme ; you will not impose on me.”

“ Your life is in my power, master Brutchie ; make no noise—you talk too loud !”

“ Take it,” said the king ; “ I value it at nought. If I am condemned to die, *you* may as well kill me, if you like to do it. If you had not deprived me of my eyes, I might have served you now ; but Hamel is your friend—do what he bids you.”

The Missionary sank down again on his bench in a state of incertitude and anxiety, not knowing what to do. To tamper farther with the Brutchie seemed altogether useless ; yet he was afraid to strike the gaoler himself ; or his passion required excitement, as a flint yields fire only on being struck, at other times cold and insensible : resistance or violence would drive him to do anything, no matter how desperate ; otherwise it was his nature to use scheming and treachery, rather than force, to accomplish his ends.

*At this time the doctor was admitted who had engaged to apply fresh remedies to Combah's eyes. It was already past eight o'clock ; and as the door opened, the Missionary looked anxiously and wistfully down the passage which led from it, to form his calculations on the possibility of escape.*

The doctor saluted him very respectfully, though without entering into conversation with him, and applied himself immediately to the business for which he had come.

"What do the people say of me, master doctor?" said the Brutchie. "And what do they think of Mr Roland?"

The doctor shook his head.

"I am but too exposed to calumny," added the preacher.. "I have no chance of justice."

"You know best," replied the doctor; "but were I you, Mr Roland, I would lose no chance of escape; the feeling is so violent against you. An idea is got about that Mrs Guthrie owes her death to you; that you have destroyed her by poison; and that you had hired a gang of Negroes to carry off her daughter."

Roland was overcome with horror; a death-like sickness seemed to take possession of him, and the perspiration dropped from his brows. "I have," said he, "no chance of justice; nothing is more clear."

*“ Indeed,” replied the surgeon, “ the prejudice is strong against you : you have such influence over the Negroes, and there is so much apprehension of rebellion. We are afraid, that if any one of your profession chose to give the word, he might raise a commotion in a few hours, and make himself, if he pleased, high-priest or king of the island.”*

During this conversation the eyes of the Brutchie were dressed, and in spite of the misery he endured, he discovered that he had not lost his vision. His face, it is true, was wofully blistered and burnt, but his eyes were still safe, although he could make little or no use of them, as they were, of necessity, bound up again for the present.

The doctor retired, and Roland remained again absorbed in thought, endeavouring to work himself to such a pitch of courage as might enable him to follow the wizard's advice, in case all other means should fail. Yet, when he had wound himself up to the point, his nature revolted again from the execution of the plan he could devise with so much consistency. Sometimes he regretted the absence of his spiritual brother, whose company would have impeded such thoughts as those which his mind harboured, and would have prevented the execution of them, had his<sup>1</sup> mind given way; and then he congratulated himself that the coast was clear, in case an oppor-

tunity should occur to effect anything of importance.

The apartment in which he was confined was about twenty feet square; built of stone, with iron gratings at the windows, which were not glazed. It opened into a passage, which again opened into a court, communicating with the public road, or street it might be called, as it formed the main thoroughfare of the town. He might have scaled the walls of the court perhaps, could he have got out of the chamber in which he was confined, and have had sufficient time to clamber: but nothing short of the violence he had meditated could enable him to get clear of his bars. The windows were eight or ten feet from the ground; however, he contrived to scale one of these, and seating himself in the ample recess of it, as well to breathe a cooler air, as to look out upon his possibilities, he thought he could hear the voice of Hamel outside the wall of the court, humming some African ditty as he paced up and down the road. It was a bright moonlight, and he could distinguish that the person who was thus parading, and occasionally singing, threw up something into the air from time to time: it might be a coco-nut or a shaddock, which he perhaps was tossing up and catching—but no, it had a string to it. It is, in fact, a rope—an insult to his misfortunes? No! it is

meant for his escape—the rope is flung over the wall, and hangs down into the court. If he could get into the court! But he is not active enough to mount by means of the rope, even if he could rush by the gaoler when he comes to lead him to the apartment in which he is to sleep, or rather to pass the night. Another foot is heard—another and another. There are several persons arriving at the prison gate. They knock and summon the gaoler, who unlocks the court yard gate to hear their business. They are white men, two of them troopers; and although they speak in an under tone of voice, Roland can distinguish that their conversation regards him.

“Directions from the governor to guard the Missionary strictly. He is accused of the most infernal crimes; and an example must be made of him. The white inhabitants of the island have long wanted such an opportunity to expose the machinations of these meddling hypocrites. He has no chance for his life; but he must be separated from the black man, blind or not—they may assist one another in any desperate attempt.” These, and such like *snatches* of the conversation, reached the ears of the too vigilant Roland, and confirmed him, as far as his vacillating nature could be confirmed, in a determination to make at least one effort for his deliverance. Combah could not, or would not, assist him. He would



make no confidant of him ; but furnishing himself with the fatal dagger, for which he had descended from his position, he now remounted to the window for any further information, and sat there until he heard the ships' bells in the harbour strike the hour, for which he had waited with some such feeling as that with which he would have expected the hour of his own execution.

The court-yard was all still ; the troopers and their companions were gone ; and while he was yet counting the number of bells, the gaoler opened the prison door and called to him. " Mr Roland, I am come to shew you your bed-room—Where is he ?" The gaoler looked rapidly round the chamber, and seeing only the king on his bench, concluded Roland had escaped by some means or other. Confused and amazed, yet without looking up to the window where the Missionary sat, he ran back down the passage, and called to some of his family for arms, crying out that the prisoner was off.

His family, with the exception of a drowsy Negro, were all in bed, according to the early habits of Jamaica ; and while he was engaged in taking down a gun from the wall, the Missionary had descended from the window, and found his way to the door in the passage, which was bolted in the inside, where he fumbled for a few seconds ; while the gaoler, hearing him from his own apart-

ment, and recollecting he had left his keys in the door, ran back, as he thought, to secure Combah. The Missionary, meanwhile, had opened the passage door, hurried across the court, and seized the rope, by which he ascended the wall more expeditiously than he could have expected. It had been made fast on the outside, so that it held stoutly, and bore the weight of Roland, who had reached the top of the wall at the moment that the gaoler seized him by the legs, calling all the while to the Negro to come to his assistance. The Negro came forward with the gun; but his master, having hold of Roland, bid the slave hasten to the prison door, and secure the blind man first. He obeyed: he ran to the door of the apartment, in which Combah sat as if perfectly unconcerned—turned the key in the lock—bolted it on the outside—and scrambled again into the court yard, where he found his master alone, leaning against the wall, his neckcloth torn as if with struggling, his white waistcoat disfigured with blood, and his pale face rendered more ghastly by the moonlight which illumined it.

## CHAPTER XII.

I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts,  
but one that fills up the cry. OTHELLO.

THE patient and compassionate Rachel sat (like Judah weeping for her children) beneath a palm tree fronting the prison wall, ruminating on the bitter fate that awaited Roland, as she thought; now turning her eyes, which were dimmed with tears, to the bright moon, as if to implore her interference, then to the dazzling ocean beneath it, and then to the gaol again; invoking the spirits of heaven to save her good-for-nothing master. She heard the ships' bells give the hour, which only caused her to think with regret that so little of the mournful night was passed. She knew not the contents of the letter she had delivered—Hamel trusted no one with his affairs; but she had seen a Negro walking up and down the road, tossing up a ball of some kind as he

sang. He had taken an opportunity of throwing the rope over the wall, when her gaze was diverted to the sea. She had listened, too, with redoubled grief to the conversation between the gaoler and the troopers; and lastly, after the bells had been struck, she heard the scuffle in the court yard, and saw with joyful surprise the Missionary mount the prison wall. He had not lingered on it; he dropped at once into the road without accident, cast a hurried glance around, and with his utmost speed followed the Negro, who, after tossing up the rope, had listened with some anxiety, and had decamped at the first sound of the scuffle.

The Missionary ran faster than Rachel could follow him; yet she still kept him in view by the moonlight, although he seemed to quicken his pace, if at any time she thought for a moment or two that she gained upon him. He ran eastward from the town, and turned up on the right hand towards the church, seated on an elevation about a hundred feet above it. She had lost sight of the Negro; but as her master reached the wall of the churchyard, which was whitened with lime, and attempted to climb over it, she saw another form arise from within it, at whose presence Roland was so much dismayed as to shriek, and letting go his hold, she saw him fall backwards to the earth. She was quite out of breath, and

her panting prevented her hearing distinctly the sounds, which yet did not altogether escape her. She stopped to listen, putting her left hand on her fluttering heart to pacify it, while the right was erected and expanded behind her ear, to catch with more accuracy the words for whose import she was so anxious.

“Come, murderer! come!” said an insulting voice; “your victim is behind you! Coward, and traitor, and assassin! Mount! here is your horse. Quick! before vengeance shall overtake you! Mount, mount; and begone!”

Another person came galloping round the outside of the wall, leading a second saddled horse for Roland. “Give me the reins,” said he, putting his foot in the stirrup; “give me the reins.”

He mounted with difficulty; and before he was fairly seated, his guide was already at full speed, rushing down the hill from the church. The steed of the Missionary followed, in spite of the rider’s efforts to moderate his pace; bounding down the narrow and rocky road, now snorting, then launching his heels into the air, and springing over the bushes that lined the sides of it. Roland was nearly unhorsed at every other moment; and fain to secure himself, seized the mane of his courser with one hand, while with the other he assured himself of his stirrups. His guide (black, brown, or white, he could not tell)

still urged the same headlong pace, without looking back even to see if he was followed, and utterly inattentive to the Missionary's prayers to travel more gently. The road itself, hewn out of solid rock, was strewn here and there with fragments of stone, until it descended to the plain beneath, where a scanty pathway among shrubs, and stubs, and tangled trees, was still encumbered with the ruins of those which had fallen in the late storm. These would have arrested the speed of an English fox-hunter by daylight, but the Missionary's guide seemed to heed them not by night. As he rushed down the hill, there was something almost awful to Roland's ears in the rattle and clatter of his horse's hoofs, and to his eyes in the flashes of fire which seemed to burst from beneath the charger's heels. The rider sat unconscious of danger or difficulty, apparently as much the master of the animal that bore him as if horse and man were really incorporated—as if they had formed a Centaur, governed by one mind, and every muscle moving in obedience to it. Not so the affrighted follower: he expected every moment to be his last; shuddering at the loose rocks which waylaid him in the descent of the hill, and shrinking from the trees, and beneath the boughs, which, without seeming to cause any obstruction to his guide, threatened to dash out his own bewildered brains at every step. He sat

with his face lower than the horse's head, holding the neck with his arms, resigning himself at times to his fate, as a dreaming man drops in imagination down a precipice; and then, when a little ascent retarded the hurry of his guide in ever so trifling a degree, assuming a thought of hope and courage, and raising his eyes to contemplate the fate which seemed to await him in every stride of his charger. The road was intricate as well as entangled, tortuous, and sometimes zigzag; crossed by two or three small rills of water, over which both horses appeared to fly as if the touch of that element would have been fatal to them. The Missionary's brains began to falter. He fancied that it was a demon that conducted him, and his memory revived a train of long-forgotten lore—of necromancies, charms, and spells, dissolved by running water. They were making for the sunken bridge.

“There,” thought the miserable Roland, “we must needs ford! We shall see whether the demon, if he be one, can evade the proof. But he leaves the sunken bridge!”

They turned up the savannah towards the ruins of his own house; and being upon a more open road, the Missionary discovered with new dismay that, although he had a bridle rein in his hand, there was no iron in his horse's mouth. He was at the mercy of his beast, who plunged and

snorted, as they rushed over the blackened threshold and the dilapidated fragments of his late abode. There were his trunks and his furniture still lying about. His guide rode towards the mansion of Mr Guthrie, and turned down a green glade, where a blaze of light burst on them from burning torches, by whose red glare he beheld a man dressed in black, reading the funeral service over a coffin supported on tressels by the side of a new-made grave. There was Mr Guthrie in deep mourning at the head of it, and Fairfax supporting the trembling and weeping Joanna, while Michal sat on the ground by her side, with a white handkerchief over her face, to conceal, if not to excuse, the tears which she could not control. There were two or three other gentlemen in attendance—the overseers, book-keepers, and an immense crowd of slaves, forming a half circle behind them. The grave had been dug at the foot of a clump of bamboos, whose leafy plumes waved in the night wind with a graceful yet melancholy motion over the house of death beneath them.—The pale faces of the Whites and the swarthy features of the Negroes were illuminated by the ruddy flames of the torches which blazed among the crowd, and rendered the scene, already brilliant with the yellow effulgence of the moon, almost as palpable as if the daylight had not been wanting. The minister stopped in the



midst of the ceremony, and looked around and down the glade towards the horsemen, whose approach was but too audible. A similar curiosity affected the multitude. The torches were raised aloft, and every eye turned towards the spot from whence the sullen tramp of the horses was distinguishable—a sound deadened by the sod on which they travelled. The whirlwind, the blast of the hurricane, the shaft of the lightning, had scarcely exceeded the rapidity with which the Missionary and his guide were hurried past the gaze of the astonished multitude, who had barely time, many of them, to make a way for these intruders, before they were again lost to sight and hearing. Yet they had galloped over the very confines of the grave, and the flame of the torches had displayed the wild and haggard features of the Missionary to more than half of the assemblage. He was bare-headed, and as he had ridden thundering past, many an eye descried him, recognised him, and many a tongue murmured or muttered his name—“Roland!”—All was silence again—astonishment, fear, or indignation! Some thought it was a demon whom he followed; others took himself for his own wraith; and a few concluded that he was even come thus to insult their grief. A minute or two elapsed before the ceremony was recommenced. Meanwhile the Missionary and his conductor pursued their course like the waters

of a swollen torrent raving over every obstacle that opposes itself to their impetuosity.

“We shall not pass the sunken bridge,” said Roland to himself; “the mountain road is before us, and the stream is dwindled to a thread!”

Yet it was buried deep down beneath the rocks of the ravine. The horses sprang over it, and the murmur of its rushing was heard only for a moment.

“Quicker, now quicker!” thought the preacher. “Alas! whither am I hurried?”

The fields of Belmont were beneath them on the left; the Rio Grande on the right. Here is the second estate of Mr Fairfax, and Fillbeer sits in the piazza still, with candles burning beside him. He is writing letters to England to —— and —— and the Society for Suppressing Vice or Slavery—no matter which. But there is a clatter in the mill yard. He starts—he rises slowly, like an elephant from his lair, and bawls to the watchman—“By heavens, ’tis Roland! stop him!—And a fury leads him!” They are gone. Their passage was like that of a falling star—a gleam of light through the elements—but from whence, and whither does it hasten? Fillbeer distinguished too plainly the expression of the Missionary’s features; but he was past. His steed began to gain on that of his conductor, as

they wound round the hills which encircled the estate ; but his guide still kept his face averted.

“ He is black,” thought Roland, “ and dressed in black—that demon that blasted me at Mr Guthrie’s door !”

The horses strive as if for the prize of swiftness, yet the road is again rocky. They fly past some Negro grounds, and the hut of the watchman Hamel. They are hurrying to the crags of his cave, and the lagoon before it sparkles in the moonlight. “ Stop—stop—stop my horse !” cried Roland in despair.

He cried in vain ! His horse came up at the same moment abreast with that of his conductor, who turned upon the Missionary, and exhibited the features of him he dreaded.

They rushed into the lake—men and horses—and sank awhile beneath its waters, which gathered again over their heads. The Missionary parted company with his beast, and struggled for his life ; but when he rose again to the surface, bewildered as he was, he could see, as he strove to reach the shore, that the steeds had regained the land, and were shaking the water from their flanks. Where was his guide ? Another stroke of his arms had placed him in safety, but a hand from beneath seized his feet, and dragged him down in spite of all his energies ! He lost his powers of

resistance. He concluded that all was over—he resigned himself to his fate, and sank ! His memory—his consciousness—were gone ! He had suffered all that death could inflict, all the agony of apprehension, all the horror, the pain of parting with his life.

Yet, as the reader will readily enough imagine, Roland was not dead. His black guide had introduced him to his own extraordinary residence, in the extraordinary way by which he was accustomed to travel there himself. The Missionary came to his senses in half an hour after his plunge into the lagoon, and found himself in the grotto which we have before mentioned as being always dry—the cave beneath the orange-garden. He was lying on the edge of the water, not altogether in darkness, for there were two or three chinks or clefts in the rock above, which allowed some rays of the night light to stream through, and one fissure admitted a moonbeam.

“ I am not dead,” thought he ; “ or have I reached the mansions of the damned ? All is silent. Is this Styx or Lethe—the *inamabilis unda*—the limbo lake—Hades ? Oh, what a vanity is life ! What fools are men ! Children always : selfish, sensual ; scrambling for toys, then throwing them away ! Do I live or dream ? Have I passed the gates of death ? Is it the air of mortality which I

breath? This is water, and I am clothed, and my garments are drenched with water! I am alive. Alas, alas! Why did my envious fate snatch me from forgetfulness? Have I to die again, of darkness, sickness, hunger, or old age, or by—— Merciful heaven! Has not this water washed the blood from my hands? There's madness in that thought!" A deep groan issued from the Missionary's bosom; and he sank down again on the bank where he sat, fainting, exhausted, and insensible.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Lay her i' the earth ; and from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
may violets spring !

HAMLET.

THE climate of Jamaica—at least the lowland part of it—being at once hot and moist, renders it necessary to inter the dead as expeditiously as possible ; sometimes within a few hours of their decease. This is to many a very painful circumstance. It increases, nay doubles, but too frequently, the pangs which rend the hearts of parents, friends, or lovers, to part thus quickly with a beloved object, for fear of its becoming a source of disgust ; to hurry to the earth the being we have idolized ; to close the tomb at once upon our affections ! May not this feeling have been one of the inducements, on account of which the Egyptians took so much pains to embalm their dead ? We are indeed told that their cares were owing to an expectation they entertained of re-

turning to life after a lapse of three or four thousand years; but whether the circumstance be correctly reported or not, it is undoubted, that they frequently—nay constantly—kept their deceased relatives, thus preserved from corruption, in their houses.

There is no idea of the sweetness of the grave in Jamaica. Everything connected with dissolution is revolting, even to the rich and rank earth in which the dead are often laid. No tombs mossed with age; no cool sequestered aisles or cloisters; no idea of the companionship with the great, the illustrious, the amiable, of former days, to console the living mourners of the deceased. All is comparatively new, rank, festering! At any distance from the towns, a private burial ground is preferred to the churchyard, the consecration of which has little or no value in the eyes of those who have once or twice crossed the Atlantic; and the tombs of a family may often be seen from the windows of the mansion house. Yet here, as in some parts of England, may sometimes be found roses and jessamine, cultivated to adorn these humble mausoleums; the scarlet ipomea exhibits its bright petals, and many other plants contribute their fragrance to the air which breathes around. We have described the spot which had been selected for the interment of Mrs Guthrie. It had been long sacred, in some mea-

sure, to the ancestry of the family: and Mr Guthrie and his friends were on the point of consigning the mother of Joanna to the tomb, when the funeral ceremony was interrupted by the extraordinary appearance of Roland. We have already described the feelings which that appearance excited. However, the ceremony was soon completed; the last looks bestowed on the coffin; the earth had rattled on the boards, and the melancholy "dust to dust" been uttered over the inanimate remains within them; the minister and the mourners were returning to the house, and the Negroes following with confused and melancholy murmurs respecting the mistress they had lost, when a new cause of surprise occurred, in the arrival of a Negro, mounted on a white mule, who came at a pace, though inferior to that which had marked the progress of the Missionary, yet not much short of the utmost speed of which it was capable, as mules seldom do their best except it be for their own pleasure. The doctor was wanted. In Jamaica, as in England, the disciples of Esculapius are accustomed, after the proverb, to carry home their work. The doctor was a man of eminence: he was called to attend the gaoler who had been stabbed by Mr Roland.

"Stabbed by Mr Roland!" The words were echoed by a hundred voices.



“ It was a poisoned dagger,” said the Negro ;  
“ and the gaoler is dying.”

“ Dying, and stabbed by Roland !”

The doctor mounted his horse and rode back with the Negro, while the rest of the party proceeded forward on their return to Mr Guthrie’s mansion.

Let us see what had followed the escape of Roland.

The gaoler had retained scarcely sufficient strength to tell his Negro that Roland had stabbed him. The wound was not deep, nor would it have been serious but for the poison with which the dagger had been drugged ; for Roland had struck with a reluctant arm.

The Negro, who had come from securing the door on the ex-king of the island, was perfectly at a loss what to do on the occasion. His master was bleeding, fainting, almost inanimate, and—as he felt assured—dying. The lock-up houses in Jamaica, not often overflowing, as in this happy and moral country of Great Britain, are less encumbered with *canaille* to keep the prisoners in safety. Mungo was the only deputy of his master, whose family were all already in bed ; and Mungo was no surgeon. He began to bawl strenuously for his master’s wife, who, half asleep, put out her head from a small window which looked into

the court, and hearing what was amiss, came running out in her undress, with her hair flying about her shoulders, wringing her hands, and dumb with consternation. The dying man said that the knife must have been poisoned. The Negro was dispatched by his mistress for a surgeon; and the lady, beside herself with the fright and horror occasioned by the scene, took the keys which Mungo had left, and without more ado led out Combah from his prison; and promised him life and liberty if he would save her husband—if he would but tell her how to cure a poisoned wound! His majesty had already made up his mind for death; but if life were in his choice, it might yet have some allurements—some consolations. The lady unloosed the bandage from his eyes, with one of which he found that he could at least see to run away, if he could remove the shackles from his legs.

“What can I do?” exclaimed the woman. “My husband will be dead.” (He had fallen into a mortal paroxysm.)

“Take off these chains,” said the king. “I know of many herbs that would cure him directly; but we have none here. Take off these chains: the key is there upon that bunch, I am sure. Cocoon—that is a certain antidote. But stay—the first three different leaves you

can find—that leg is free—unloose the other—I will run for his life!”

“Ah!” said the woman in an agony, “you are deceiving me.”

Her husband groaned, and she turned to raise and support him; while Combah, freed from his chains, walked away deliberately through the gate which Mungo had left open.

He thought no more of antidote cocoon, or any other counterpoison; but using the privilege of his existence to move about on two legs, was soon out of sight of the gaol and of the town, marching with his utmost celerity towards the fastnesses of the Blue Mountain, where he was accustomed to quarter.

He had not proceeded far, before he was joined, first by one Negro, and successively by six or seven more of his ancient companions, whom the report of his incarceration had brought to the Bay, if not to his assistance. These were his friends of the Obeah cup, who told him they had again mustered strong in the mountains, and meant to have attacked the prison that very night, to set him and Roland free.

“Aha!” said the king, “it is Roland who has set me free: he has killed the gaoler. I thought he had not had the heart; and he is gone to meet Hamel in the churchyard; but I will never again

count on him, notwithstanding ; for nothing but despair urged him."

"Is there no other white man you will trust?" said one of the Negroes ; "or shall we kill them all? There are two men from St Domingo, who have a large canoe concealed among the mangroves at the little Turtle Crawl Bay, to windward off Port Antonio. They are of some consequence in their own country, and will assist us with their advice here ; and if we do not succeed, we can get to the canoe and sail away. But first let us punish the magistrate who put you in prison."

"It was Mr Guthrie," replied the king. "Let us take away his daughter, and set fire to his works. We must kill him if we can, and all the Whites. I tell you we have no chance but by extirpating every buckra in the island."

"Here are men," said one of the Negroes, "from Hanover and Westmoreland. The Negroes to leeward are all ready to rise, and some of those in Portland and St David's. Let us at least make one attempt before we run away, for we can (all of us, and more) escape to a certainty."

While this conversation occurred, the monarch and his satellites had arrived at the junction of the roads opposite Mr Guthrie's house, and could distinguish, by the torches which the Negroes carried,

the return of the party from the funeral. Mr Fairfax had taken the road to his own abode; the doctor and his guide (the gaoler's Negro) had already passed them in their way to the town; but the Negroes belonging to the estate were too much about to admit of any attempt being made on the individuals of the family at present. Another night would offer a better opportunity. Meantime it was necessary to apprise the rest of their companions that Combah was free, as well as to secure the good-will and assistance of Hamel, without whom many of the conspirators were unwilling to stir. The circumstance of Roland having slain the gaoler might perhaps do more harm than good to the cause with some of the party; although there were others who would value any volunteer in the cause in proportion to the crimes which would render it imperative on him to die rather than capitulate under any circumstances. These would reckon on Roland as a good ally. On Roland—the wretched Missionary whom we left in the Duppie's grotto, among the obeahed or enchanted crags of the wizard's abode! They knew him not.

Meanwhile the king and his comrades continued their march into the interior, meeting from time to time with some of their companions on the lookout, and having once narrowly escaped falling in with a party of troopers who were watching

the embouchure of one of the passes from the south side of the island. They flung into the thicket at the sound of the horses' feet, and heard the riders laughing, as they passed, at the story of the Missionary's black eyes, and of Combah having had *his* blown out. They had a prisoner with them, whom by the moonlight one of Combah's friends suspected to be Nimrod, alias Drybones: his voice confirmed the supposition. That Negro had returned from Kingston with a portmanteau, of which one of the troopers had taken possession. It contained, he said, property of Mr Fairfax, which he had recovered for him from pirates who had taken it in Cuba. He had a pass from Mr Guthrie, and another, as he assured them, from the governor's secretary, to whom he had been sent. More they could not learn.

The troopers had passed by; and the eloquence of Nimrod, who was not unwilling to be in such custody, was wafted by the land wind away from the too curious ears of his late comrade. It was near midnight before Combah arrived at the rock furnished with the tent of sail-cloth, from which he had sallied two days before, to wreak his vengeance on the man of grace—the treacherous and inconstant Roland. What a variety of adventures had his fate, his very passion rather, we may say, crowded into this little

portion of his existence! And how completely had all his exertions for the gratification of that passion recoiled upon himself! Every way foiled in his own intentions, he was, at least indirectly, indebted to his unhappy victim for his own life, rescued from a violent and disgraceful death by the crimes (it is true) of the false Missionary, whom he had himself endeavoured to assassinate. But he had shewn the feeling which almost all savages possess in the hour of peril and despair: he had betrayed no fear of death; while, on the other hand, his religious adversary had been overwhelmed with horrid apprehensions, and to escape from his prison had at last committed a deed of open violence, at which his nature and his conscience alike revolted. The Brutchie had so far triumphed here, though to Hamel was due the merit of having driven the Christian to extremity. He was the demon to whom Roland owed his life; for which, even in his own thoughts, he began to fear that he had compounded with his salvation. The Brutchie was the gainer by the compact, and prepared to put in force the schemes which his present good fortune had encouraged him to entertain.

## CHAPTER XIV.

There's nothing serious in mortality :  
All is but toys.

MACBETH.

THE morning had scarcely dawned, when Joanna, arising from her almost sleepless couch, walked down from the great house, attended by the pretty Michal, to visit the tomb of her mother. The black garments worn at the funeral had been exchanged for a robe of cooler texture, whose sable ornaments yet marked the customary mourning. She had no head-dress, except a black veil which flowed down to her feet, and would perhaps have better suited the shadows of a cloister in the temperate zone, than the raging heat and dazzling sky of the tropics. Her aspect was pale and melancholy, but her gait had yet the elasticity of youth ; and although her eyes were dimmed with tears, the tenderness and the delicacy of her grief would scarce have detracted from her beauty in



the estimation of any beholder. But beauty is a perishable flower, and youth turns to age, and roses wither, and “*vanitas vanitatum!*” as the preacher says—“*omnia vanitas*”—all is vanity! Yet roses are beautiful till they fade, and seem to require the notice of every beholder. Who would pass without bestowing a look on them—without entertaining a thought of their colour and their fragrance? The pretty Michal—she was also a rose, and carried with her a basket of roses, to strew upon the grave. This was suspended on her left arm. With her right she held an umbrella over her head, in imitation of her mistress, although the sun had not yet risen

“—— from under this terrestrial ball.”

But Michal was bareheaded. They seated themselves beside the grave, on which they began to stick the flowers, while the melancholy yet affectionate office revived afresh the sorrow of Joanna, and renewed the sources of her tears. Yet she did not delegate the task to her hand-maid. The roses were planted, and various seeds sown in the fresh mould, and many a sigh breathed over them, which at least consoled the living, if the dead beneath, or the spirit of the dead, could heed them not. There is a luxury in grief like this—a sacred luxury

“None but the deeply wounded ever know.”

But we must not turn moralists. In the midst of their grief and occupation they discovered a Negro man gazing at them, and at the grave, from behind the trunks of the bamboos whose feathery boughs waved over them.

“Who is this?” said Joanna to the maid.

The Negro bowed, and *made a foot*—as the dialect has it.” “I am a slave of Mr Fairfax.”

“Hamel!” said the Quadroon, a little surprised, “What is the matter? And what do you want?”

“I came, like you,” replied the watchman, “to look on the grave of this buckra woman;—and to see you shed tears over your dead mistress.”

“Hamel,” replied the soubrette, “you had better have been at your work; at least, at your post, watching your master’s property.”

“It will take no hurt,” rejoined the wizard. “There is one there in my place, who keeps a good look out, though he seems to be blind. You know, Miss Michal, who it is I mean.”

“But last, or least of all,” continued the Quadroon, as if regardless of his answer, “should you come here to interrupt my mistress in her sorrow.”

“I ask pardon, Miss Michal,” replied the Obeah man, “and of Miss Guthrie: I did not mean to interrupt you. I could mourn too, for she was a good woman, and everybody loved her. Well,

she is gone to a better country : is she not, Miss Michal ?”

Michal gave no answer.

“ When the African *slave* dies,” continued Hamel, accenting the word slave, “ he is told, and he thinks perhaps as he dies, that he goes back to his own country”

“ And don’t you believe it ?” said Michal.

“ No, mistress ;—no more than you do. Where should I go to ? To that country from which I was dragged into slavery—to be seized, and bound, and sold again ? I had cows, and goats, and horses.”

“ And slaves too ?” said the Quadroon, interrupting him.

“ Yes, I had slaves ; it is true. God is just. I was not a cruel master ; but I had sold slaves—I had even taken them—made war to take them : but it was the custom of my country. Ah !” seeing Michal about to speak—“ You are right, mistress. I know what you mean. I seized black men—men and women too, of my own colour, and sold them ! I deserved to be a slave myself—but it was an abominable injustice. The white men tempted me to commit the crime ; the white men punished me for it ;—and they will themselves be punished in their turn.”

“ How so ?” said Joanna, interposing.

“ God is just,” replied the wizard. “ Are you not

punished now? Are not the white men punished in their wives, and children, and grandchildren? Is it not a crime now-a-days to be the master of slaves? Who sends the Missionaries here to tell this to the Negroes? All the planters hate and fear the Missionaries. They are the ministers of vengeance, the agents of men blinded by vanity, who, without knowing anything about the matter, send them here to torment the Whites—aye, and the Blacks too. They will have vengeance in their turn.”

“Who? The Negroes?” said Joanna.

“Yes, mistress—the Negroes;—look at Hayti. And they will again be punished for what they do. Look still at Hayti.”

“There are few Negroes who think as you do,” said Joanna. “Most of them are too fond of the Missionaries.”

“If they knew them, as I have seen them! Look on the grave before you. I tell you that some of them are worse than devils—but God is just. Ah, Michal! who will shed tears or scatter flowers on my grave? I am old, and ready to die!”

“Why should you wish to die?” said Joanna.

“Why should I wish to live?” rejoined the Obeah man.—“A slave—a despised, denounced Negro! I shall see no more prosperity; and, when I die, what soul shall mourn for me?”

“That can signify but little,” said Joanna, “when you are dead.”

“ But it may signify to think upon it while I am living. If it signify nothing to the dead, as indeed it may not, why do you come here to lay flowers on the tomb of this buckra woman? You would like to think that some friends—some little one—or at least this pretty Michal, would take care of your grave, were you to die, and come sometimes to look at it; and you like to think that her heart would swell while she looked, and the tears come into her eyes as she would say—‘ Poor young mistress! God bless her!’—So you say now; and think so of this kind-hearted lady whom they have buried here. You say, God bless her; and you fancy that her spirit hears you and is pleased. I should be pleased to think that any one would do so much honour to my grave; but it will never be—I have no children to bless my memory.”

“ Well but, Hamel, you are not going to die,” said Michal.

“ Indeed I am,” replied the Obeah man.

The soubrette could scarce restrain a smile.—  
“ Die, Hamel! When, and where, and for what reason? You had better go home to your cave, and leave my mistress and me to ourselves. The sun is already risen and will soon drive us home; and you should know better than to intrude yourself upon any persons.”

“ It is always so,” replied Hamel. “ We are

unwelcome, and intruders, even when we come to do the most important services."

"Pray leave us," said Joanna.

"Do you know," replied the wizard, as if scarce heeding her, "that Roland has escaped?"

"Yes, yes," rejoined the soubrette. "We saw him riding last night like the wind. He seemed to fly, and your companion of the cave was before him."

"And Combah," continued Hamel, "he too is escaped."

"He has lost his eyes," said Michal.

"He can yet see," rejoined the other. "He has seen you this half hour, and only waits my departure, to seize your mistress, and carry her off."

"Heavens!" cried Joanna, "Who is this, Michal—this Negro whom you know so well?"

Michal in alarm was gazing round the landscape in search of the object of her terror, at least for a confirmation of the Obeah man's important though somewhat mysterious assertion. "He is a watchman and a faithful slave to Mr Fairfax," said she; "and you may trust him."

"You think your mistress may trust me," replied the Negro. "I thank you even for that: you may certainly trust me. Mr Fairfax should have been in sight before now."

"Quick, Michal!" said Joanna, "Let us return to the house; there may be danger."

“There is danger,” continued the Obeah man. “There was a plot laid last night against your family, and your father’s Negroes are even now alarmed; and there must be soldiers—I heard their drum: but you must not stir. My presence, insignificant as I am, has kept yonder ruffians hitherto at bay. Had you been alone, had you returned, you had fallen into their hands. And see—they come!—There are three skulking towards us, and three or four more, with guns, half hid beneath the bushes.” The Obeah man made a step or two before the grave, and waved his hand to the Negroes to retire; but they heeded him not. He called in an authoritative voice, and held up his right hand again; but they ran only the faster towards him. Joanna and Michal had fled. Still they came towards him; and when he cursed them by the spirits of his own country, they only smiled at him in derision.

“Your children shall be the slaves of slaves,” said he, “and yet they shall laugh at your own shame, and trample on your bodies before you are dead! Begone! The ants shall gnaw your bones, and the vultures struggle for your flesh! I curse you by the spirits of earth and of hell! Your joints shall be rottenness, and you shall eat dirt like the worms!—Tremble, and begone!”

His imprecations had the effect of startling

the Negroes for a moment, though by this time they were within a few yards of him. They had come forward with a smile—perhaps an assumed smile—of self-confidence. Hamel knew them not: they were strangers, and told him now, with something like a sneer, that they were Christians, and defied his charms. The Obeah man defied them in his turn. -

“ See,” said he, “ if your christening shall prevent the fortune I have told you. Miserable fools!—Is it for such a purpose as this that you are turned Christians?—Seize me, take me, kill me!—I curse you again by the moon that is growing less and less—by the darkness that is gone—by the fire of the earth, and the thunder of the mountains!—You shall die like the wounded hogs of the woods; and your bones shall whiten and wither above ground! You have dared to interfere with me—you know me not—back to your silly master!”

The Obeah man had fairly talked them and their courage down. The Negroes looked at one another, and then at the wizard, beneath whose scowl they were actually abashed.

“ You are then a friend of the Whites?” said one of them. “ Why should not the king of the island have this white girl for his wife? A black man is as much worth in the eyes of God as a



white man; and God Almighty knows no difference of colour."

"Peace! fools and brutes, and begone!" replied the wizard. "I am a black man, an African slave, and a—— I tell you you are the scum of the earth—worse than the trash of the sugar cane, and the dunder of the still.—Hark! that is the scream of Michal! Villains and murderers, your comrades have gained upon the women!"

He set up a loud shout as he drew from a cutacoo, which he carried on his left arm, a small arrow or dart, scarce a foot in length. The Negroes seemed aware of his purpose, for they turned about and took to their heels; but they ran not fast enough to escape the Obeah man's revenge. He placed the arrow in a hollow stick, which he had held in his right hand, and putting it to his lips, blew it with sufficient force to wound the hindmost of the Negroes in the back as he ran: a second, as hastily taken from the cutacoo, flew as swiftly after the next of the black Christians, and stuck in the right shoulder of that baptized gentleman. The third Negro escaped. The others ran a very few yards before they found it imperative on them to stop. The first drew his machet, and faced about, but fell as he wheeled; and the second, already on the

ground, discharged a horse-pistol which he carried, with as little aim as discretion. The ball flew over the wizard's head, and the report of the weapon served only to call the attention of the soldiery, and of Mr Guthrie's Negroes, to the scene of this catastrophe.

## CHAPTER XV.

A plague upon them! Wherefore should I curse them?

HENRY VI.

“ I WAS wrong,” said the Obeah man, “ to give Roland the means of escape, for it had been better that Combah had died on the scaffold, than that my friend—my friend?—yes, yes, he has been my friend—my friend Mr Fairfax should be injured in life, or property, or happiness, or hope. Combah was a minister of my revenge, but master Fairfax redeemed me from a tyrant. For his sake I had forgiven—I forgive—the white men, and will do for them all that can be done by Hamel before he dies. Where are the women? Are they safe?” continued he, addressing some of the troopers as they rode into the glade, which was soon filled with soldiers and Negroes, men, women and children, all in confusion, calling aloud for Miss Joanna.

“Who fired the gun?” cried one of the cavaliers, apparently more bent on learning the particulars of the conflict, if such it may be called, than of attending to the Obeah man’s request respecting the women. “Did you shoot these two men?”

“I have no gun,” replied the Obeah man. “See to the women—see for Miss Guthrie! Is she safe?”

The confusion became greater as all parties were crowding—some round the wounded Negroes—others straining to get a sight of Hamel, among whom Mr Guthrie in his regimentals, and mounted on his wall-faced charger, exclaimed aloud for his daughter, and endeavoured to force his way towards the wizard.

“Master Guthrie,” cried this latter, clambering into the bamboos; “master Guthrie, where is Miss Joanna? Have you found her?”

The man of war looked aghast. “No! no!—I have not,” said he. “Where is she? Whither is she gone?”

“Hear me,” rejoined the wizard, trying to make himself heard above the murmur of the crowd, and almost participating in the despair of the old buckra;—“hear me!—Her maid screamed—some Negroes have certainly carried her off.”

“Where and by whom was that shot fired?”

We heard the scream and the shout ; and the shot brought us to this place."

"What a misfortune!" said Hamel. "That shout has misled them, and that fool's pistol—Seek for Miss Guthrie. She is gone, carried away—these Negroes will tell you where."

"They are insensible," said one of the cavaliers ; "dying, if not dead."

"No, I can revive them," cried the Obeah man. "Dismiss the crowd, hunt the woods, I can direct you. There are Maroons here, who know the runaway huts by the great waterfall—let them search in that quarter—look to the leeward road—these men came from the west—the robbers cannot yet be far away—get rid of this crowd."

As this was an affair of gallantry in some sort, to liberate a damsel, a prisoner among a crew of ruffians, the crowd began to disperse very rapidly in pursuit of her ; the Negroes to the woods and mountains, the troopers to spread the alarm in all possible directions. An estafette was sent off to the governor, to beg that martial law might be proclaimed ; and a reward of one hundred doubloons was offered for the recovery of the young lady, whose loss occasioned almost as much confusion as the rape of Helen in times past.

Where was Mr Fairfax? Hamel had sent him notice before cock-crow; himself had dogged the ruffians, little expecting to see the object they were in search of thus expose herself unconsciously to their intentions.

The crowd was quickly got rid of; and Hamel, not over anxious to exhibit his skill to the multitude, drew forth his antidotes, from the same cutacoo which had furnished his poisoned weapons, and applied them internally as well as externally to his victims. But though he was reputed a conjuror, his remedies had but little effect for the present; and all the intelligence that could be obtained from the ruffians amounted to an intimation that Combah would have taken the white girl into the mountains of St Ann's. Threats, promises, the assurances of recovery, or of certain death, elicited nothing farther; for in fact they had nothing farther to disclose.

The Obeah man stood before them, leaning on the tube with which he had shot his arrows, and surveyed their features with that appearance of calm indifference which seems the property of the Carib, or the North American savage, under similar circumstances; but they did not bear their torments, or rather the apprehensions of death, with the firmness which is attributed to those unchristian vagabonds. The Negroes

gazed occasionally on him whom they called a cruel and heartless tyrant, with a mingled expression of horror and thirst for vengeance, fear of dying, and disgust at their murderer.

“ Did they feel no remorse at their conduct ?” said the wizard. “ Were they to go to the heaven of the Christians, although they died in the commission of a crime which the Christians denounce ?”

The Negroes begged to have a doctor and a parson ; and although the hand of death seemed to be on them, their nature yet revolted at the taunts of the Obeah man, whom they without hesitation condemned to the bottomless pit, and to the everlasting fire. Hamel smiled at them, and would have turned away, but that Mr Guthrie, and the two or three persons who continued with him, were somewhat solicitous that he should give some account of himself.

“ Take me,” replied he, surrendering his arms, that is, his tube and his cutacoo, into which the old gentleman peeped rather fearfully : “ take me, do with me what you please. I am ready to lay down my life ; the sooner the better, for I am weary of this world. I can tell you, I was at the bottom of this plan of insurrection—yes—never start nor stare. I am determinéd to yield up myself—my life—everything. I would have revenged myself on the buckras for bringing me

away from my own country, and selling me to a Negro. I would have made Combah king of the island, to revenge myself on the missionaries, and secured to him your daughter, and half-a-dozen more white women, to teach the buckras that black men have as much courage, and power, and knowledge, and strength, and right, as white ones. They will repay one day on all your heads. There is justice upon the earth, though it seems to sleep; and the black men shall, first or last, shed your blood, and toss your bodies into the sea!"

Notwithstanding his great affliction, which had almost overpowered the feelings of Mr Guthrie, his hair would have erected itself, if its ligature would have allowed it, at the prophetic denunciations of the Obeah man, but too accordant with his own long-entertained ideas and those of the rest of his companions. He heaved an involuntary sigh—a gasp it might be called—and asked the wizard what he was to do with him.

“What you please, master Guthrie. I am now on your side. Yes—you may believe me; or why have I brought these villains to the ground? I am for Mr Fairfax. He is my master; and though I am his slave—his slave!—still he has been my friend. I will lay down my life for him, for I am no more worthy to live. I have betrayed the cause of my companions; and if they do not



deliver up your daughter, I will betray them all—every one of them : I gave them notice.”

There was a silence of some minutes, which ensued, while Mr Guthrie betrayed, by his vacant stare, that various thoughts were passing in his mind.

“I know not,” he said at last, “that I am justified in leaving you at liberty. Yet why should I apprehend you? Can you pledge yourself to be true to me?”

“To Mr Fairfax I am pledged. Yes, I vow to serve him with my life. But it is not for the hope of life or liberty that I swear. Do with me what you will. If you shut me up, I am useless; if you leave me so—free—I will find your daughter or die in the attempt. Please yourself, I ask no favour.”

“Go, in God’s name!” replied the old planter. “I know the confidence which Mr Fairfax puts in you. Go—find my daughter.”

The Negro made a bow to the buckra, and turned about, having received his cutacoo and his tube, with the two arrows which he had withdrawn from the Negroes. He marched off, after having given the white men a look of much signification, and some satisfaction, and murmured as he walked along—“These Christian white men are not all bad. There are many—slaves in their heads and their hearts—fit only to

work in their own sugar mills. It is a pity that all should be confounded together, and that when the Negroes *do* rise, the good and the just, shall—must—be punished all alike.”

He was soon lost to view; while Mr Guthrie, distracted with his various occasions for anxiety, and almost overpowered with grief, rode hastily back to his house, leaving the wounded Negroes to the care of his comrades, who, equally weary of continuing at this spot, and finding that their prisoners were fast sinking into a lethargic, if not a mortal stupor, retired one by one; each, in turn, consigning them to the rest, until the last bequeathed them—or the care of them—to two of Mr Guthrie’s Negroes, who ultimately bequeathed them to the sky and the winds, stretched on the earth, a few paces distant from the grave of the white lady, adorned with its roses and other flowers, which had already begun to wither beneath the rays of the sun.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Hear, all ye spirits, that in hell lament !

Hear a new sort of pain and punishment.

FAITHFUL SHEPHERD.

THE Obeah man, assuming the pace which his years had not yet o'ermastered, marched off incontinently to Belmont ; learning by the way that Mr Fairfax was missing, and that his people were in pursuit of the robbers, who had carried off Miss Guthrie, assisted by no less a personage than fat Fillbeer, who had volunteered his services for the occasion, having fallen in with some of them, whom he encountered on his road to the Bay, whither he was bound for the purpose of detailing the circumstance of his having seen Roland led away, as he thought, by the devil or an evil spirit, into the interior. His idea was not weakened when he learned, in return, that Roland had stabbed his gaoler, and escaped. From hence the wizard betook himself to his cave,

before which he saw, as he expected, the water Duppie, with his arms folded, sauntering slowly round the little lagoon.

“Then Roland is here,” thought he. “My life has been a life of strange vicissitudes, but all unhappy; yet not so cursed as the life of this hypocritical villain. And now what are we to do with him? He sticks at nothing for his own ends, and is even now stained with the blood of his fellow Christian, the gaoler, to escape the penalty due to his crimes. If I were in love with life, if revenge had any charms left me, I might be proud enough of my success, my triumph here. This Christian, most Christian Missionary!—this man who denounced me, who cursed me in the presence of Combah, who would fain have been great high priest of the island,—this man, full of crimes and wretchedness, is in my power. He has drank pretty deep of the cup of affliction, yet he has never been a slave—the goods, the property of a Negro—like myself. But I have done with the world, with life, and all it has to offer, since I have been obliged to betray the cause in which I embarked. I shall renounce everything, and all hopes—and set this scorpion free! I think his sting is taken out of him, and that he can do no more with Christians, or with those he calls Pagans and Idolaters. He shall have the boat

that is hid in Turtle Crawl; and he and his brown wife may depart together."

With these reflections, and this resolution, the Obeah man approached the lagoon, from which the Duppie, according to his custom, retired at his approach; a ceremony still kept up between these mysterious personages, although they had now a good understanding. Hamel followed him among the recesses of the rocks, and learned from him every thing he desired respecting the unhappy wretch whom he had imprisoned in the vault beneath the orange gardens. His grief, his repentance, his horror and distraction in the solitude and darkness, together with the oppression of his own thoughts, had begun to unsettle his wits.

This was a situation in which Hamel by no means desired to keep him, as to his mental aberration, nor physically, as a residence for his yet breathing body; but how to get him out of the cave, was a question not easily solved—a feat not easily executed, more especially in his present state of mind. The Duppie knew no means but by persuading him to dive beneath the rocks into the inner lagoon, and, in case of his refusal, to push him into the water, and drag him as before. But this, the Obeah man concluded, would effectually destroy his reason. He chose a different plan.

The recesses of these rocks, their hollows and their winding passages, all communicating in some way with one another, were but too well known to the wizard. They formed (they yet form, as any man may see who will explore them) a labyrinth of vaults, of which, since the destruction of the Aborigines, perhaps no one has even thoroughly made himself master, except this African magician Hamel; not quite so desperate a personage as he who has been immortalized by Scheherazade, yet no mean subject, notwithstanding.

He retired into his penetralia, and lighted a lamp, while the Duppie was commissioned to watch from the terrace above; then threading the intricacies of his dungeons, he exhibited at length the rays of his light to the eyes of Roland, through a narrow passage in the rock, about fifteen or sixteen feet above the floor of the cave, where he was seated by the water's brink, ruminating somewhat in Malvolio's mood, not of Pythagoras or wild fowl, but of darkness and the fiery abode! He looked up timidly and wistfully at the light, and descried (which he had never done but by means of it) the chasm by which the rays streamed into the vault. The inequality of the surface, or wall, it may be called, of his dungeon, enabled him without much inconvenience to clamber sufficiently high to look into the passages. The light was gradually withdrawn as he mounted, and by

the time he had entered the opening on his hands and knees, it was removed to such a distance as to be scarcely visible. Still he followed, murmuring invocations all the way as he travelled, to be shielded from the power of Satan, to be spared from the temptations of the flesh, and to be supported against the weaknesses of this frail nature of ours. The light was carefully withdrawn as he approached it, and without once getting a sight, or even conceiving suspicion, of the Obeah man, he was peaceably conducted to the inner lagoon, where he beheld once more the light of heaven, and found some food already placed for him by his diligent host. Yet wearied and oppressed as he felt, Roland was not sufficiently reconciled to mortality to know the claims of hunger. There was a fire in his veins which he in vain essayed to allay with water, and even at this his stomach revolted. He sat awhile beneath the palm tree, out of the sun's rays, gazing at the inaccessible rocks around and above him, until his exhausted nature could hold up no longer. He then stretched himself at full length on the grass, and fell into a heavy and undisturbed slumber.

Meanwhile Hamel, leaving his prisoner to his dreams, bestowed a few minutes on himself to break his fast, and make some provision against the fatigue he had to undergo in the pursuit which he intended of those who had stolen Miss

Guthrie and the Quadroon. He was somewhat surprised to have heard nothing of Mr Fairfax, and was almost tempted, at times, to suspect that he had been made away with by some of the gang who had attached themselves to the fortunes of Combah : if not, he must certainly be in pursuit of her himself. Having taken his hasty meal, he equipped himself with a gun, in addition to his poisoned weapons, and having delegated his office of watchman to the Duppie, descended to the works. A rumour had now got abroad that Mr Fairfax was dead—murdered ; and reports had arrived from the westward, intimating that St Mary's parish was nearly all in rebellion, as well as many other districts to leeward ; that the Maroons had resolved to be neuter in the business, or were in fact rather disposed to take part with the rebels than to come to points with them. Some of the Maroons, it was supposed, had got a warp from the apostles of the true religion, and having long contemplated the struggle which all had anticipated, had perhaps thought it most prudent to let the Negroes begin the fray, waiting, before themselves should move, to see what advantage they would be likely to reap from joining either party—or whether it would not be the better plan to let the Negroes master the Whites, and then themselves to make war on the Negroes.



These reports had alarmed the White inhabitants of Belmont, as well as the Negroes, who were variously affected as each opinion seemed to prevail—there being, as on most estates, men of all dispositions; many faithful, sincerely attached to their masters; many timid, irresolute, and fearful of any violent change, yet rather hoping, like the virtuous of Great Britain, for better times—for liberty and property, women and wine, and all the *etceteras* of luxury, not perhaps excepting slaves—free slaves of course—to work for them, dress them, adorn them, and think for them, if such a thing could be effected! Most of the people of Belmont, however, were engaged in pursuit of Mr Guthrie's daughter, or in search of their master. The rest, that is, the very young and the old, the infirm and the sickly, had assembled at the door of the hospital, round that huge mountain of flesh, the Quinbus Flestrin, Mr Fillbeer, who, seated on his horse, was haranguing his audience on the vanity of human life, and condoling with them on the loss they had sustained in their young master thus suddenly snatched from them. The Obeah man made him a bow as he passed, at which the fat man swelled himself out to his greatest dimensions, and said with a sneer, "What! you too are going in pursuit of your master! Is there none here," looking round, "that will revenge me of that traitorous

villain? He is confederate with the damned spirits in the burning lake—a dealer in charms and magic; and by his spells, or his more wicked intrigues, has spirited away your young master.”

The Obeah man halted a moment, and cast a look of contempt at the orator. “Master Fillbeer,” cried he, “do you learn wisdom so slowly, and at such expense? Have you forgotten that, but a short time since, you had a rope round your neck? Mark me! If my master is not found speedily, you will be suspected of having spirited him away, in revenge for his having treated you as you deserve. Look at that tree!” pointing at the one to which the fat man had been attached. Fillbeer hung his head. “Take the advice,” continued Hamel, “of one whom you call a companion of devils and the damned. Begone from here! Begone from the other estate! You have no longer a home there. Mr Fairfax is in the possession of it.”

“Ah, sirrah!” replied Fillbeer, gnashing his teeth, “what is it you tell me? You are a prophet, are you? Mr Fairfax in possession of Red Castle! Stay, let me speak to you. Then he is alive still?”

Hamel had delivered his oracle, and attended no farther to the summons of the fat man, who, in spite of his rage and pride, was astounded and

disconcerted at the discourse of the Negro, and disengaged himself from the circle that had been listening to him, to follow awhile, for farther information, the object of his abomination ; but Hamel was already in the thicket, attended by another Negro, who had met and joined him at the works ; and in his company the Obeah man marched along briskly and contentedly.

• Mr Fillbeer was alarmed at the threat of the Obeah man ; for as such it seemed to affect him. “ His power of attorney ! ” thought he. “ There is no packet arrived, nor any ship, in this quarter ; but a duplicate may have arrived at Kingston. I am a fool to delay longer here. My course must be to the old world, and fortunate I shall be to reach it ; for here are coming troubles and turmoil, battle and murder, and sudden death.” He put his hand unconsciously to his neck, as he uttered this last remark, and heaved a deep sigh. “ Yet what is to become of me in the old world ? I have been improvident, not dishonest. What have I to look to, what to live on ?—Preach ! My mass of flesh will hardly go down with the righteous overmuch ; and that trade is already overdone : besides, I have not the *reading* which it requires now-a-days. The youthful aspirants

at evangelism would cut me out. They are mathematicians, classical scholars, adepts in chemistry, and music, and drawing. They have fifty ways of insinuating themselves into the graces of the fair sex, the rich, the powerful, the persuasive; besides youth, and simplicity of looks at least. For their hearts, it signifies little. Theirs is the road to preferment—D——n Hah! I forget myself.

*Balnea, vina, Venus, corrumpunt corpora nostra.*

Living in Jamaica is altogether bad for the morals. There is Roland has flung himself headlong to the devil!—*Balnea! Vina! Venus!*—Poor Roland! How shall I live? These are not times of the buccaneers; and even for that trade I am too unwieldy. Too old to make love—a second wife! mercy on my body!—Heigho!”

With these and similar reflections the mind of the ex-brewer was in a state of fermentation, as he rode up the valley to his abode, where he learned, according to the declaration of the wizard, that Mr Fairfax had been to demand possession in virtue of a power of attorney from Mr M'Grabbit, which he had received from Kingston by the hands of a Negro named Nimrod. The power of attorney qualified him to act in all matters relative to that gentleman's affairs, as Mr Fillbeer saw by a copy which had been left

him ; so that he was wholly superseded, and required to settle his accounts, and pay to Mr Fairfax all balances due to his employer in England. With the copy of the power, Mr Fillbeer found a very polite and obliging letter from his successor, desiring to make everything as easy and agreeable to him as possible.

“ As agreeable as possible ! ” muttered the man of fat. “ He turns me out of house and home, takes my revenue, the means by which I live, and calls me to account for years of management in the way the easiest and most agreeable possible ! ’Sbl—d ! I wish, G—d forgive me, that the rebel Negroes may make M’Grabbit’s heart ache for this ; and Mr Fairfax’s too. I had half hoped,” (he whispered this to his conscience) “ that he had really—that the report of his death, of his being missing, had been true.”

The book-keepers and the overseer had seen the power of attorney, and Mr Fairfax was gone to Kingston to have it recorded. The white men were all in arms, and Mr Fillbeer was invited to equip himself, according to the laws of the country, in his military array.

“ Never again, by heaven ! ” cried he. “ I have nothing at stake : what is the country to me ? If it were at the bottom of the sea, I should be as well pleased, so I were out of it.”

While he was yet speaking, a musket was

fired at no great distance, the ball of which whistled over the house. He popped down his head before he was aware of it; but though another and another succeeded, his courage seemed rather to revive than to be humbled at the sound. He was walking along the piazza, and as the firing continued, he demanded his horse, notwithstanding the resolution he had but lately made, and determined to ride to the scene of action.

“Let me put myself,” thought he, “in the way of fortune. If I am to be killed, amen! if not—Give me a musket.” (This was aloud.) “There’s firing all along the woods. I may be deceived by the echoes, but I think some of the shots are half way up the Blue Mountain. My horse and a musket!”

A light horseman arrived in a full gallop at the house, with an order to prepare accommodations and provisions for a company of soldiers now on their march.

“With all my heart,” said Fillbeer, reading the note. “I am but a passenger. Burn the house, if you will. What can your soldiers do in these woods?”

“They can do little,” said the trooper in reply; “but they are a protection to the neighbourhood. There will be another party at M‘Lachlan’s ruined settlement. You know the road; will you lead them to it?” Fillbeer thought a mo-

ment. "This may be a path that leads to fortune. I'll shew the way ; where are your troops?"

"They will be here anon."

"I will lead them, and send provisions for them beforehand. It is a dangerous place, environed with woods, which are infested with run-aways, and was but a few days since the scene of a grand meeting."

"Aye," replied the trooper, "your friend Roland preached there."

"My friend!" rejoined the man of fat in amazement.

"Nay, no offence. Roland, who has murdered the gaoler at the Bay, is said to have taken refuge there."

"Indeed!" replied Fillbeer. "He galloped in that direction, but I rather think it was the fiend of hell who led him, for he flew past this house."

"No fiend," answered the trooper, "but a black rascal who took two of our best horses from a stable in the town. His name is Hamel—a rebellious idle vagabond, and a dabbler in Obeah. But I must begone again. See to the men, and let your Negroes carry provisions to M'Lachlan's. There is no roof to the house ; but there is a cellar, and some of your workmen may patch up a covering of fan-palms, or any kind of thatch."

"I will do all this," replied Fillbeer, "and

render all the service in my power. The sooner your men arrive the better, for there is skirmishing in the woods already ;—and look ! see ! here are two Negroes bringing a third a prisoner.”

“ What are they ? ” said the trooper, riding towards them.

“ Maroons,” replied Fillbeer ; “ and the first fruits of our war—a wounded runaway. This is most likely one of Combah’s men, the villain who has stolen Mr Guthrie’s daughter. Welcome, my friends, (addressing the Maroons.) And you, sirrah ! (to the prisoner) where is the buckra young lady ? Where is your master ? Where is this Combah who had his eyes shot out, and yet finds his way from a prison, and contrives to carry off the prettiest girl in the country ? Tell me, or the truth shall be wrung from you.”

“ Master Fillbeer,” said one of the Maroons with whom he was well acquainted, “ there is a reward of one hundred doubloons for bringing in the young lady. We mean to find her. This man is a stranger ; he met us in the woods, and fired at me ; but he is a bad shot. We hit him, as you see, and we must leave him with you.”

“ I did not mean to hit you,” said the Negro ; “ I fired at another man, one that carries poisoned arrows, and has stolen the young lady for himself.”

Fillbeer paid little attention to the Negro’s remark, his head being filled with the thoughts of



the doubloons promised to him who should bring in Miss Guthrie.

“One hundred doubloons!” said he to himself. (533*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) “I would I were in the secrets of Roland; for here is a little fortune to one in my unfortunate circumstances.—What said you—” cried he aloud to the Negro, “one that carries poisoned arrows?”

“Yes,” replied the other,—“an Obeah man.”

“Ah! that Hamel—his life is too precious for such a hand as thine! The villain!”

He gave the trooper his congé, and called again to the Maroons. “Hear me!” (The wounded man was carried into the hospital.) “Take me with you. Where is the young lady? Do you think the white men will give you the reward of five hundred pounds? No such thing. They will not trust so much money among you in these times. Bring the young lady to me. I will claim the reward as my own, as if I had found her; and you shall share the money with one another, and with myself. Mark you—I am going to M'Lachlan's in the mountains, with a company of soldiers,—to the ruined and deserted settlement. Will you bring her?”

“We must first of all find her,” replied one of the Maroons, laughing; “and Master Guthrie will keep his word. But do you hear the firing yonder in the woods? The white men will bite the

dust—and here come your soldiers. Good bye, Master Fillbeer.”

“ Will you bring the white girl to me ?”

They ran away laughing.

“ D—n it,” said the ex-brewer : “ if I had but Roland’s persuasion ! Why, they would go to the bottomless pit to please him ; and they make a joke of me. Rogues ! I should not wonder if there be treachery in all they say and do.”

The soldiers took possession of the house ; and having refreshed themselves, the company which was destined for a farther march, followed Mr Fillbeer along the mountainous and narrow path towards the ruined settlement.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Every man is fixed to a spindle by threads fine as those of a spider's web.

LUCIAN.

IF we have compared the fair Joanna to the Proserpine of Schedoni, at her first introduction to the reader, the situation in which we last left her must be allowed to have enhanced the resemblance in a double point of view, inasmuch as she had here the garland at least in her hands, if not the chaplet on her head ; and she was carried off by a Negro who might well have sat for the figure of the Pluto, though perhaps he resembled the infernal monarch in no particular but colour. It was not Combah himself. The majesty of Jamaica was yet too much afflicted with burnt eyes to undertake this manœuvre. A sturdy deputy snatched up the young lady, and a couple of his fellows made little account of the pretty soubrette.

The whole party was quickly in the heart of the forest, where Combah had prepared a mule to hasten the flight of Miss Guthrie. No plan having been concerted for the seizure of Michal, there was no second animal to convey her ; nor indeed did she require it, being perfectly capable of traversing the woods on foot ; and although the Negroes once or twice mounted her behind her mistress, she persisted in walking, and gave her solemn promise that she would not attempt any escape while Miss Joanna was a prisoner.

Nothing could exceed the horror and agony of the young lady at finding herself in the power of a set of ruffian Negroes, who affected to console her, as soon as her mental distress admitted of her listening to reason, by an assurance that Combah would not offer her any violence, but would marry her according to the laws of the Christians, as soon as they should arrive at his abode in the mountains. Nay, the robbers assured her, in the hearing of Combah, that they would themselves kill him, if he did not, in every respect, conform to the customs, moral and religious, in which she had been brought up.

As for himself, the monarch walked behind her mule, at this remark, with some such dignity as that with which Alnaschar threatened to treat the vizier's daughter at the moment that he kicked down his fortune. His face was yet tied up, ex-

cept a space only sufficient to allow him to see his path ; so that, fortunately for his feelings, the expression on his features was invisible ; for he was wofully ashamed of himself, notwithstanding his previous threats. Nay, he felt more disconcerted in the possession of the object (which his vanity had required for its gratification) thus unlawfully and brutally obtained, than he had done in the anticipation of a public and ignominious execution. First, he saw that the young lady abhorred him, and was overwhelmed with distress and confusion. His black majesty was not altogether devoid of human feelings : he could resist violence with force, parry treachery with cunning, assail the strong, and shed blood where there was a desperate or a dangerous resistance : but the tears of Joanna,—the beautiful, the helpless, the innocent,—in his clutches, or in the fangs of those whom he knew to be more brutal and inhuman than himself, affected him with a real sympathy.

In the second place, the king—this sable monarch—lost all his majesty in the presence of his captive, all his monarchical self-assurance. Among Negroes he fancied he felt a superiority ; but in the train even of a beautiful and elegant white maiden, an accomplished European, and a Christian (for there was something in the conviction of that idea which confused him) he sank

even in his own estimation into nothing, or worse than nothing—into the character of a blackguard freebooter, who thus disgraced his title to supremacy, and set an example to his subjects, which he ought to punish as an offence to be expiated only by death. He despised himself for what he had done.

And, in the third place, he knew not what to do with this beautiful and delicate creature, whom he had seized in the execution of a pious duty to her dead parent,—where to bestow her, or how to entertain her, until the fortune of rebellion should put him in possession of a better sort of palace than the hut which formed his present abode.

Altogether, he felt with regard to his hapless prisoner, as a sportsman sometimes feels at sight of a woodcock which he has merely pinioned and caught alive. The ardour of the chase being cooled by the possession of the game, he contemplates the shape and strokes down the plumage of his prey, while he gazes on its large and expressive eyes, so bright, so mild, and so harmless, until his heart revolts at his being the cold-blooded executioner of a creature which actually excites his commiseration—a feeling enhanced by the consciousness of its helplessness : he must kill it, to spare it farther sufferance.

But Combah had not arrived at this extremity. It is true, he wished the damsel to escape, while

he apprehended the impossibility of her so doing, except by means of his assistance ; and to offer that openly would have staggered his followers, who would have immediately entertained a notion that he was about to betray them, and thus to make his peace with the white people. Yet he was determined that the young lady should suffer no indignity which he could avert—a strange resolution to have formed so suddenly, and upon the very heel of his offence. But what is man, even in his soberest moments ? A changing, whimsical, and capricious being ; vacillating between duty and passion of some sort or other, till all his passions forsake him. And what is he when the restraint of duty is suddenly and wholly removed, when he feels himself master of the law ? A compound of still stranger contradictions—according to his phrenological bumps, of course—an agent for great vices and some virtues. In short, Pluto changed his mind, for want of some one to quarrel with about his Proserpine. Had Roland been there to interfere with him, and dispute his title, the young lady had perhaps fared very ill on the occasion.

But although the royal Combah entertained these charitable thoughts towards the fair maiden, his delegates were not affected in the same degree, nor indeed in a similar manner. They had not just escaped a halter ; they had not sprung back

from the precipice of death, after having trembled on its brink. They were successful,—they had carried off the prize for their Brutchie; an overt act which committed the whole party, and the Negro cause, to that issue which fortune or providence might please to give it. Their minds were inflamed with various passions, all turbulent; and they were ready for anything—fire and slaughter. Yet as they themselves meditated no farther violence to the lady than to make her queen of Jamaica, they hardly thought her an object of pity, notwithstanding the dreadful anxiety and despair in which she was involved, which they from time to time endeavoured to mitigate by assurances that she should be lawfully married as soon as a parson or a missionary could be found to perform the service.

The pretty Michal walked beside her mistress, and supported her at intervals on the back of her mule; for she made a virtue of necessity to avoid the contamination, the touch of the Negroes, who would have carried her in their arms, and sat in her saddle with all the fortitude and resolution of which she was capable, not knowing what to say or what to do; whether to make an appeal to the good feelings of the Negroes, to throw herself on their mercy, or to excite their cupidity by offers of reward. Threats she had too much apprehension to use; and indeed, so young, so



inexperienced, and so alarmed as she felt, it was not without difficulty that she retained the command of her reason and her speech, and was able to conduct herself without a more humiliating display of her horror and disgust.

Yet if she was so incapable of hope or consolation in her terrible calamity, as indeed the reader may well imagine she must have been, what could her faithful Quadroon do for her, being subjected herself to the same circumstances, without the protection which her mistress derived from her rank? She was exposed to all the indignity that might be heaped on her; an object of desire to the rebels, no less than her mistress; and there was no question of marriage respecting her. Yet her feelings were as delicate and as refined as those of her mistress, as to the endurance of any personal insult; although the recollection of that impression which she had received from her acquaintance with Mr Fairfax as a Mulatto, came over her mind now and then with rather a melancholy foreboding that this calamity was a sort of judgment on her. Yet she could escape, she made no doubt, but that she would not leave her mistress. When the firing commenced in the woods, and the mule and its escort were turned into another path, amid the confusion that ensued from the shouts of the Maroons, and some of the rebels endeavouring to mislead them by their fire,

an opportunity offered, more than once, of darting into the bushes, or gliding down some of the precipices—for she was active and courageous; but to leave her mistress was impossible.

They travelled for three hours, without halting, by some of the mountain paths which were barely accessible to mules; occasionally striking into the thicket, and crossing from one of these roads to another, to avoid pursuit; for they were soon sensible that there were followers after them; and the firing of the Negroes, as signals to one another, served as a warning to them which way to steer. But they sought not the mountains of St Ann's: it was to the huts by the great waterfall, as mentioned by Hamel, that their course was directed; and this spot was far into the interior, towards the foot of the Blue Mountain. The waterfall itself was seen by Joanna, for some time before they reached it, issuing apparently from the base of the great eastern cone; but in order to reach it, they had to cross numberless streams and rills, and traverse a jungle that ages of peace could hardly bring into cultivation. Their path for some miles lay through an extent of plain, overgrown solely with grass, but this so high and thick that it formed a perfect wall on either side, and shut out the view of everything but the mountains, which towered beyond. The heat was here suffocating, and almost overpowered

their captive; but the firing which they heard below, and which they apprehended to proceed from the Maroons—perhaps sent after them, or otherwise engaged with their fellow runaways—deterred them from halting to relieve her. Every step which they proceeded appeared to Joanna to add another link to the chain which she fancied would prevent her return to civilized life, and increased the weight which hung upon her heart. They came up, at length, with a party of their comrades, who were squatted beside a sort of tent on the flat surface of a rock, which rose above the rest of the plain sufficiently high to afford a view over this wilderness of grass, and of any party or person who might attempt to make towards it. The Brutchie was saluted as their monarch; and they accosted the young lady with an affectation of great politeness, which was extended, though with less ceremony, to the sou-brette. The party consisted of about a dozen individuals, including two women, who laughed immoderately at the approach of Joanna, yet still as if they designed no direct offence in giving way to their mirth; for on being called to account for it by some of the males, they begged pardon, and retired. These gentry were all very scantily clad; and their costume, of rather a ridiculous order, would have excited the mirth of a beholder on any other occasion. Their garments

were mostly stolen perhaps, and in many cases seemed designed by the wearers rather for ornament than use. One man, for instance, had crammed his head into the laced cap of a child ; another wore an old regimental coat, without anything under it but his black skin, and a blue apron or petticoat round his waist: a third had an old cocked-hat, with no other vestment than a pair of drawers ; and a fourth wanted soles to a pair of military boots, with which he was equipped, being, with the exception of a dragoon helmet which almost overshadowed his eyes, as naked as any of the heroes of baron David, and indeed not much unlike his Romulus, or Leonidas, as to costume ; those warriors being clad in some such fashion, that is to say, with only helmets and sandals, whereas this sable warrior had a helmet and boots. There was not a shirt among the party. One or two had ragged frocks, and some made but a very slender sacrifice to decency. Miss Guthrie and her maid were more than once horrified at their appearance, so whimsical and savage did it seem. Yet the individuals were not uncourteous—nor even less than polite. They were drinking coffee and eating cocoes on their arrival, and after rising to receive the new comers, they ushered the females into the tent, and brought to each of them a small calabash of

the former, and a plate full of smoking plantains, with a little pot of salt butter, and a couple of pine apples; and having commended them to the care of their own women, closed the tent, and left them to their own thoughts.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Ta.* How now, good fellow? Wouldst thou speak with us?

*Cl.* Yes, forsooth, an your mistership be imperial.

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

JOANNA and her maid had not been long relieved from the presence of the runaways before they began to plan an escape, and endeavoured to prevail on their black sentinels to oblige them with their connivance, if not with their assistance; but Mrs Wowski and her friend Patch were made of sturdier stuff than to be twisted so suddenly to such a purpose. Joanna promised them money—they did not want it: their freedom—that they had taken: houses, lands—those they meant to take: finery, dresses, and ornaments: these staggered them, but they were also to be won. They seemed to enjoy the thoughts of seeing the white women brought down to their own level, and resisted all offers of bribes, and all entreaties. But it is more than probable they

were intimidated, or had it not in their power to be of use.

Meanwhile, the conversation of the black men was at times audible in the tent, and Michal distinguished, with some new feeling of horror, that their debate turned on herself. The gentleman in the laced cap, whose voice she recognised, expressed his determination to marry her; while another of the worthies intimated an idea of his right to have her without marrying or any such trumpery. But these were not the only aspirants for the honour of possessing her: Michal was very beautiful, though not wholly of European descent; and as the beauties of the fair sex were some of the charms which led these Negroes into rebellion, the desire of obtaining her affected all the group. They thought not of winning her with suit or service, or courtesies of any kind; the only question with them was as to the right of preference or precedence, a kind of claim which many referred to the Brutchie, though one or two were so refractory as to talk of fighting for her.

Combah bid them be peaceable, and let the women alone, until they had at least assured themselves of the possession of the country, of the destruction or expulsion of the white male inhabitants, and of the annihilation of the buckra soldiers. "You seem," said he, "to pay no regard to

the firing, which may yet be distinguished below us and around us. You think we are safe from the red-coat soldiers ; but we are at the mercy of the Maroons, if they will not join us ; and you know the white men have great offers to tempt them with ; and no doubt a great reward is already offered for this young lady."

"I believe it," cried he of the cocked hat. "Brutchie, we are not safe upon this rock. The white tent can be seen from many estates below us. We shall have the militia after us before night, if not the Maroons. The houses will be secured along the sea-side, and defended ; and though the Negroes rise to leeward this very day, or at least this night, we shall be attacked, and perhaps cooped up here, if we do not move off. The firing is from some of the militia: they are shooting at our men in the bushes below, who are gone to steal master Fillbeer's cattle."

"Master Fillbeer," said another, "is a missionary: we must not thief his cows and his goats."

"A missionary!" exclaimed Cocked Hat. "He that was nearly hanged the other day by the Negroes at Belmont! He is no missionary. He is a preaching attorney, and no worth ; a cheat, and a cruel beast. But the cattle are not his ; they belong to a Scotchman in England, and we have a right to them. Why does not the Scotch-



man come and live here himself, and defend his own? Has not Roland told us we have a right to them?"

"Yes, yes," replied the type of Leonidas; "and the English people over the water say so too: all the books, and the newspapers, and the petitions, say we have a right to everything in the island, if we can win it; and I shall win the Quadroon girl, and have her myself. I will fight any man that says I sha'nt have her."

"You are a fool, sir," said another of the party; "I can kill you in a minute."

"You are a fool yourself," was the reply; "I will have the girl."

"You are both fools," exclaimed the Brutchie; "and if either of you draw a cutlass or a pistol, I will toss him down the rock. Here—see—are two of your comrades coming with a prisoner—a Maroon. Is this a time to be wrangling about a girl?"

The two Negroes arrived, bringing a prisoner. They were the men whom Fillbeer had thought to cajole out of the reward, and whom he only knew as Maroons, while they were in fact runaway slaves, and had left to the care of his surgeon one of their own comrades wounded by the Maroon they had in their clutches. The first news they communicated to the assembled gentry was the offer of the reward for the restoration

of the young lady—one hundred doubloons : but the idea of restoration was quickly abandoned, as the company made no doubt of acquiring thousands. They were more disturbed at the account of the soldiers being quartered at the different estates, as these would serve for rallying points, and keep the slaves in subjection. They would serve to encourage those who were attached to their masters, and intimidate those who were disposed to revolt. A Negro or two may run away, and take to the woods ; but women and children are not so easily exported to the mountains ; and Quashie does not like to abandon house and furniture, his pigs, his turkies, and his cocks and hens, to those who may make a merit of staying with their masters.

“ But what makes the Maroons fight against the free Negroes ?” said the chief with the cocked hat to the prisoner. “ How many Negroes have you taken in at different times to the white men ?”

The Maroon was a tall handsome black, of a bold and dignified mien, and not in any way daunted by the circumstances of his present situation.

“ I have done my duty,” said he. “ We have rules to govern us, as you ought to have. We are bound to obey the laws made and agreed to by the white men when the last war was over with them.”

“But, sir,” replied the Negro, with an ironical politeness, “why do you meddle with us? How did your fathers and grandfathers get their liberty? Have we not a right to do as you did? You rebelled and succeeded, and you killed plenty of white men, and you have been free ever since.”

“With your freedom,” replied the Maroon, “we have nothing to do : but a reward is offered for the daughter of a planter you have taken away ; and all the Maroons of this part of the island are after her.”

“And if they are,” said the Negro in return, “they shall not have her. Why is not a black man good enough for her? It is not for you to say or think otherwise. The people in England, and Ireland, and Scotland, say we are all of one colour—all Christians. Don’t they steal women there, and take them, and marry them, from one country to another? Don’t the white men here, planters, book-keepers, doctors, soldiers, sailors, parsons, and all, take black wives, and brown girls ; and why are not black husbands fit for the white women, hi? A pretty thing truly ! Suppose you had taken one of us, what would you have done with him? You would no.doubt have delivered him up to the white men to be hanged—would not you? Speak, if you please, sir.”

The Maroon was still silent.

“ Sir,” continued the Negro, “ I shall put you to death, if you do not answer me to my satisfaction.”

“ What!” exclaimed the Maroon, “ without trial, and in cold blood? Is this the way in which you mean to conduct your new government? The Maroons will all fight against you, if this is your plan: and be assured my death will be revenged by the death of at least a hundred of you.”

“ Sir,” continued the Negro, “ we don’t want advice from the Maroons, and we are not afraid of them.”

“ But we wish to be in friendship with them,” said Combah, interfering. “ For shame, shipmate, that you talk so like a fool.”

“ Me a fool!” retorted the other; “ you fool yourself.”

The Brutchie pulled the handkerchief from his face, and gave his comrade as fierce a look as he could manage with his scarred features and sore eyes.

“ If I were free from wounds,” said he, “ you dared not have replied to me in this way. But I will make you obey me while I live and am your king. Here—all the rest of you—listen to me—come round me!”

They all rose from the ground, and half a score, in addition to their former numbers, came from the adjoining bushes, and mingled with the herd.

They were in all about five and twenty persons, besides the Maroon; as extraordinary a looking group, perhaps, as the eyes of an European ever beheld. Most of them had muskets or fowling pieces, in addition to their cutlasses and pouches, slung over their shoulders, or girded round their waists, to carry their ammunition. Some had likewise bayonets; and of those who had no fire-locks, two were armed with pistols, and a third was equipped with a couple of billhooks, and a few fathoms of rope.

“Hear me all!” said the Brutchie. “Am I not your king?” They answered *yes*—with the exception of the culprit in the cocked hat.

“Here is a man,” continued the monarch—pointing to him—“who calls me fool, and disputes my authority—what does he deserve?”

“Brutchie,” replied the semblant of Leonidas, “he is sorry for it; he did not mean it.”

“No, no,” said the Cocked Hat, “I am not sorry. Combah called me fool first; and I am not a fool, nor a coward, but as brave a man as he is, and as wise. I have heard the Missionaries, and am a Christian; and I think I know more about God Al—ty than he does—and about salvation and faith. He is in darkness and the shadow of death. He is blind to the true light!”

“Silence!” cried the king, thinking, from the sneer on the face of Cocked Hat, that a double

allusion was intended to the physical as well as moral obstruction in his vision. "Your religion is your own: no one has reproached you with that. I ask again, what does he deserve who insults the king you have chosen? You have sworn to obey—for remember, you have taken an oath!"

"Brutchie, Brutchie," said one or two of them, "he is a silly man, and knows no better."

"Not more silly than you," cried the culprit.

"What does he deserve?" continued Combah.

"Does he not deserve to be shot?"

There was a dead silence.

"What is a king without authority?" said his majesty. "We must have some rules to be guided by. This man wants to provoke all the Maroons against us—the Maroons, who are used to arms, and hunting hogs, and know all the secure places among the mountains, and can follow us anywhere and everywhere. They are capital shots, and will have great rewards offered them for taking us. And shall we begin by killing one of them in cold blood, because he has tried to win the hundred doubloons offered for this white girl? We ought rather to make them friends; and if it is a question of importance with them, let them have the white girl, and restore her to Mr Guthrie, and get the money. You think I want her for myself, but I can give her up for the general good, so that the Maroons will

join us, or even swear to let us alone, and give us ten men in exchange for ten of ours, as securities that they will not make war upon us, nor assist the Whites or the Mulattos, if they offer any resistance."

The silence that followed this speech was interrupted by a laugh on the part of one of the Negroes, who caught a glimpse of Michal peeping from out the tent; and he of the cocked hat answered with a sneer, that Brutchie did not mean to return the girl; or if he did, that it was to make friends with the Whites, and could not be to serve the cause of the Negroes.

"But it is to serve their cause," rejoined the king, "if I surrender her. Let the white men get out of the island."

"Ah, cha, cha!" cried two or three voices at once. "If the white men get out of the island, they will come back again with ships and soldiers, as they did at St Domingo, and burn our provision grounds, and catch and hang many of us. No, no! Kill the Whites—all but the doctors!"

"Not the parsons," exclaimed Cocked Hat, "nor the bishop."

"Pooh!—hang the bishop too," said the counsellor in the laced cap. "What do we want with a white bishop?"

"You are a beast," cried Cocked Hat, addressing this last. "You want to shed the

blood of the saints, and you demur about shooting this heathen Maroon, who has fired at one of us."

"He fired at me first," said the Maroon, "and two others with him; but will you give up the girl? You, sir, who call yourself king of Jamaica?"

"*I* call myself king!" retorted his majesty, rather in a huff—"I *am* king—these men call me king."

"You are welcome to be called so," replied the other; "but you do not expect the Maroons to call you their king. Do you not hear the firing all around? What will you do with this girl? Give her to me; I will take her to her father, and give you the reward, or you may come with me."

"Hold your tongue, sir!" said the man of the cocked hat, again interfering. "If the Brutchie, because he is wounded and half blinded, and was near hanged, is afraid to keep the girl, I will have her."

"I have a better right than you," cried the Laced Cap.

"I will fight anybody for her," said Leonidas, stepping towards the tent, which he would have torn open.

The Maroon stopped him; but he bid him get out of the way, and called him villain, threaten-



ing him at the same time with his bayonet, and proceeding still as at first.

The Maroon detained him a second time, and even used some degree of force to prevent his entering the tent; on which the Negro, swinging himself from his grasp with a look of sovereign contempt, struck him a blow on the breast with his fist.

“Take that,” said he, “for your impudence;” and drew his cutlass.

The king demanded silence and attention, and bid them fall back and respect the white girl, who was their queen; but while he was endeavouring to make himself obeyed, the Maroon had returned to the gentleman the blow which he had received, and levelled him with the earth, where he lay sprawling in a state of insensibility.

“Keep your cutlasses quiet,” said Combah, “and your muskets. The Maroon has done well to punish the insolence of this man who lies before you. He did but strike him with his fist, and you see how he has stunned him.”

The Maroon had seized the musket of the fallen man; but he was in evident confusion, for what could he do against a host? The Negroes were some of them levelling their guns, but Combah threw himself before the object of their wrath, and bid them desist in a voice of thunder.

“ He is our prisoner,” said he ; “ a Maroon and a brave man. You shall not kill him, but through my body, and the first man that moves a hand, dies !” The Brutchie had his firelock in his hand, and directed his imperfect gaze to the half circle before him. “ Villains ! traitors !” exclaimed he—seeing two or three disposed to violence. “ Down with your musket, sir—drop your arms !”

The rest of the party had torn the weapons from those of their comrades who offered to resist ; but Cocked Hat was too outrageous to be controlled. Whether his particular spleen was excited against the Brutchie for calling him fool, or against the Maroon for having caused the conversation which had drawn upon him that odious designation, he struggled to get from the grasp of his companions, and, in spite of their efforts to prevent him, got round upon the flank of his antagonist, still levelling his firelock, which was at length wrested out of his hand, at the moment it was discharged. His aim had been destroyed ; and the ball passed through the top of the tent.

The Brutchie looked around him for a moment ; while the rest of the Negroes withdrew from their exasperated companion. He stood alone and in some disorder, finding himself in fact disarmed ; but he had not much time for deliberation. The monarch profited by the opportunity, and pointed his own piece at the refractory Negro.

It was the impulse of the moment, and a moment served for the execution of that impulse. Leonidas rose from the ground; but at that instant the Brutchie's musket was discharged, and the chief with the cocked hat reeled to the verge of the rock, where he clung, a minute or two, to the bushes that fringed its sides; but his grasp was soon too feeble to sustain him; his knees sunk—his head fell on his breast; and before any one of his ambitious comrades had reached a hand to support him, he had dropped from the rock into the long rank grass which waved on the plain beneath it.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Come on sir ; here's the place : stand still. How fearful  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low !

KING LEAR.

“HE deserved his death,” said the Brutchie, seeing that his subjects were in some alarm. “So perish all the enemies of Combah—all your enemies ! Let us make friends with the Maroons. We have a common cause, and this man is indebted to us, to me, for his life. Go,” continued he, addressing himself to the prisoner, “go to your friends, and tell them what you have seen—what we have done to deserve their friendship.”

The Maroon looked on the chief with a scrutinizing glance, as if the scene which had just transpired had surprised him not a little.

“I go,” said he ; “but, trust me, the friendship of the Maroons is not to be bought at this rate. They will give you a king. They will not take an African for their master ; and nothing that you

have done will induce them to desist from the pursuit of this girl. Let me offer my advice. Send her home, and her maid with her."

"What is the use of that?" cried he who had proposed to marry Michal. "If the Maroons want to give us a king, why should Brutchie do anything more to please them? Cha! We are strong enough without the Maroons, I think; and we had better make it their interest to beg our friendship, than submit to them in any way whatever. We shall be a great many thousand hundred, and they are but few. Though they are used to arms and to the mountains, so are we. I think the runaway Negroes are quite as good as Maroons; and as to giving up the women, that they may get a hundred doubloons for them, I hope Brutchie won't be so mean as to do that; besides, we won them—we have a right to them. There will be many more taken before tomorrow morning; and if these are returned, we shall only be laughed at."

The scene that had taken place, the conversation which ensued, had all been overheard by Joanna and the Quadroon; the latter indeed, from time to time, peeped through the opening of the tent, and continued to give her mistress some detail of the proceedings which we have related; but when she saw the Negro struggling to get loose his musket, that he might kill the Maroon,

and when the shot had been discharged though the tent, both mistress and maid, overcome with new horror, and beginning to fear for their lives in the scuffle, would have certainly made an attempt to escape, but for the intervention of Patch and Wowski, to whom these bursts of passion, these heroic squabbles, were a little more familiar.

“Never fear, mistress!” said one of them, half laughing; “the Brutchie must be king and master, or the Negroes will all be killed.”

“Oh, heaven!” replied Joanna, “save me from these horrid men!” Then turning to the females—“You have women’s hearts; you have been young, and have known fear: have mercy upon us, as you will one day have to appear before the God of all men, and give an account of your actions! Think what it will be to have on your consciences the crime of having overwhelmed in misery and ruin two of your own sex, whom you might have saved! Think of this! Think of your children, if you have any. Think what my father must feel for me, his only child!—my father, whom all the Negroes love!”

The heart of Wowski was touched; and Patch could not look at the blue eyes of the suppliant, streaming with tears, without being sensible of pity. She hid her face in her hands, and walked to the opening of the tent, as if to go away; but Joanna, seizing her scanty petticoat to detain

her, again implored her, by the compassionate feelings which God had rooted in her heart, to take pity on their desperate condition. She was on her knees before the Negress, and strove to force away one of her hands with which she had concealed her face, in order to oblige Mrs Patch to be a witness of her grief and distraction.

There were tears in the eyes of the sable dame ; and when, in the natural and rather affecting struggle, the black and the white hands came in contact, that of the Negress not only pressed the fair hand of her suppliant in a way which was intended to inspire confidence, but the black lady, unobserved even by Michal and her own companion, pressed it to her thick lips and kissed it.

If she had said aloud—" Fear nothing ; I will save you—I have power to save you ;" those words, consolatory as they would have been, had failed to inspire the confidence or gratitude which Joanna derived from this genuine triumph of human nature—of the black woman's best feelings over all other considerations.

Mrs Patch looked at Wowski, and Wowski looked at Patch.

" What do you cry for?" said the latter ; " you silly somebody—wipe your eyes : " and she wiped her own.

The conversation without had ceased, and Combah burst into the tent. " What are you at ?

Fear nothing," cried he to the Blacks. "Tears!—and for what? You are in no danger. But we must be stirring. Miss Guthrie, you can ride no farther; but we will take care of you. To the waterfall, Wowski! We cannot leave you here. Keep up your spirits. And you too, Mrs Michal! There are soldiers in sight, and a crowd of armed Negroes, and a host of Maroons: but we shall be a match for them. We know the fastnesses as well as they; and in this wilderness those who pursue are sure to fall into the ambush we shall lay for them. Quick! quick!—The firing increases, and there will be danger here."

There was a grin upon the faces of some of these worthies, in spite of the horrid scene of death which they had just witnessed, as the women came out of the tent. Joanna was refreshed by the hope she had conceived, rather than by the food she had taken or the short repose which had been allowed her, and expressed her readiness to walk; but a sort of litter had been fitted up by some of the Negroes for her use, consisting of a couple of poles with boughs laid on them, in which the polite monarch intreated her (his intended spouse) to deposit herself; and Michal seconding the royal request, the poor young lady at last ventured to trust herself to the care of two sturdy revolutionists



who took this, her palanquin, on their shoulders. Michal walked by her side.

They had already attained such an elevation that the climate no longer oppressed them with heat; and as they ascended at almost every step, they speedily gained a region devoid of all inconvenience on that score. They were now in a dense jungle of various trees, through which it would have been difficult to penetrate but for a narrow path lately cut, which conducted them towards the waterfall. They formed a considerable procession, the Maroon being in the van, guarded by two or three Negroes—as it was thought he might be useful as an hostage or an ambassador: the motley multitude followed, in the midst of whom were Joanna and her maid, attended by the two Negresses, and Combah, who preceded half a dozen of his new subjects, employed to fill up the path, as they passed, with prickly bushes, as well as to cut here and there other openings into the thicket, which might mislead their pursuers, and throw them into a confusion, of which his majesty and his friends meant to take an occasional advantage from many spots in their course which commanded portions of the route by which they journeyed. They had not quitted the rock half an hour, before a shout announced the arrival of the enemy at that station; and as they wound

along the path which Combah's party had taken, his people, already posted in every favourable situation, kept up a mischievous fire on their pursuers below. The army of the monarch mustered stronger as they proceeded, and could not amount at present to less than a hundred Negroes; but their numbers were invisible to their pursuers, who in vain returned the fire of the rebels in their march; it was only by watching every projecting rock, or overhanging tree, in these circuitous gullies, that the avenging party got a shot at their enemies; and then so cautious were the rebels in exposing their persons, that scarce a shot any execution. The path at length terminated in a wider road, which led along a track of level ground for at least a mile, through the same undying, undecaying forest, where the traces of men were visible in many directions, and small glades, from time to time opening into the roadway, betrayed the avenues by which the wild hogs had been often pursued into their sanctuaries. Within these coverts the rebels had stationed many of their men, with directions to lie down till the approach of the enemy, and having allowed him to pass, to give him one volley in his rear, before they shifted their position. No one would dare to enter the thicket; nor could any danger be apprehended from such a pursuit, except the enemy had dogs; and in that case

flight was safety. There was an impregnable station by the waterfall, which was to be the rallying point for all the subjects of king Combah.

It was past noon when the rebels had gained this their favourite position; and the sky, which had been for some hours threatening a change of weather, was by this time entirely shaded with grey clouds, which dissolved into a small rain, unlike that poured down on the lower realms by the Aquarius or the Jupiter of the tropics. The climate was altogether temperate, and even cold to some of the Negroes, whose fiery constitutions exult only in the raging beams of the sun. The murmur of the waterfall had already informed the females of their approach towards this citadel of the Blacks; yet it was too faint to have inspired them with a sufficient idea of the awful and tremendous scene which they were soon to behold, or of the quantity of water which there precipitates itself to such a depth, that it is nearly dissipated in spray before it reaches the bottom of the gulph into which it falls. The murmur it produces arises rather from its chafing the rocks through which it rushes to the perpendicular cliff down which it is lost, and from the reverberation of the wind that rages upwards, than from any farther obstruction which the river encounters, although, for the first few yards of its descent, the clashing of the different streams, as they

emerge from its bed, causes perhaps some additional roar. If the fall were half the height only, the noise would be multiplied tenfold.

A tortuous and narrowing path brought the train to the edge of the cliff opposite this scene, where the water, gushing over the rocks, seemed almost whirled by the wind into the mid air between them and the spectators, before it descended into the chasm beneath ; a depth so involved in mist and spray, overhung with trees, and entangled with withes, that the bottom of the gulph might have been as low as that through which Milton has described the *chute* of Satan, for any thing that could be seen to the contrary. Here and there a rock, covered with the moss of centuries, protruded its green head from the mist which encircled it, like waves rolling round an emerald island ; yet every line which these formed in the picture before the spectator, was intersected by the long shafts of the giant palm-trees which grew out of the crevices and in the hollows of the rocks beneath, and spread their plumes into the mid air. These feathery tufts might be distinguished as far as the eye could penetrate through the gloom ; but the trunks which supported them yet eluded the observer's penetration, and the bases of their shafts were altogether lost in the denser atmosphere below ; so that a poetical fancy might have compared them

to spirits called up from Hades or from the smoke of Tartarus ; and as they waved backwards and forwards in the wind, a more serious beholder would have thought, with Roland, of ill-starred, unelected Christians :

——“ imprisoned in the viewless winds,  
Or tost with restless violence round about  
This pendent world.”——

The tortuous path above mentioned brought the rebels to the edge of the precipice, opposite that down which the river precipitates itself. The fathomless abyss lay between them ; a ravine widening to the northward, until it forms an opening of immense proportions ; on the south, that is, towards the line of the mountain, the gully contracts gradually until it is not more than forty feet across, and farther towards the interior probably ceases altogether : but in that quarter the ground is so broken, and precipitous, and loose withal, that it would be impossible to pass along it without grappling-irons and ropes, anchored in the firm land on the top, as a security to hold by. The weight of a man on the verge or the side of this (as it is there called) Runaway Land, would loosen a sufficiency of earth and rubbish to overwhelm a little army ; and although along the plain there are some remains of rotten and decaying crags, yet there is not wood enough to shelter an invader from the fire of those who might be

stationed on the opposite side, where the rock is of the firmest texture, and covered with a wilderness of bushes, which would effectually screen the attacked from all danger of suffering from the fire-arms of their adversaries. The rock down which the water falls juts out into the widening ravine like a modern bastion; and from the edge of the stream southward, along the cliff, to the spot where the chasm becomes narrowest, were seen a range of low huts, scarcely rising above the bushes. Here a couple of trees, laid and bound together, side by side, formed what in England is called an alpine bridge, without battlement or parapet, nor even a rope to assist the dizzy passenger, who must be somewhat adventurous to attempt it, if not urged by any necessity.

Many of the Negroes, long familiar with the passage, strode over the bridge with as much confidence as if they depended on wings wherewith to save themselves in case of a false step, or being alarmed, or losing their balance. Others sat down and trembled; some crawled on all fours; some were dragged along by their companions, clinging to the trees with their arms and legs; and some were altogether afraid to encounter the passage. One man, disdaining the apprehensions which assailed him, assumed a courage that scarce belonged to him, and stepped

awhile fearlessly along the shaking trees, until he had gained the middle of the ravine; his spirit failed him here, at this critical moment—he staggered, and fell! But although, according to the Negroes' remark, his head was gone, he had not loosed his hold with the loss of his balance: his body swung beneath the trees; but he held still, like a monkey, with legs and arms, and even with his teeth.

A comrade sallied to his assistance—one with whom the reader is already acquainted—the hero in the laced cap. He kneeled on the bridge, and seized his friend by the arm; for he had no clothes except his drawers, which were out of reach for the other to lay hold of; and a Negro has no hair that can be grasped. They struggled together for some time on the trees, the one to save, the other to be saved; until the first, bewildered with the terrors arising from his situation, let go his hold of the bridge with his hands, to grapple the arms of his friend stretched out to assist him. The weight overcame the muscular strength of the other, who in vain bid his friend recover his grasp of the bridge: he could not induce him to let go the present hold on which he depended. There were others, seeing their danger, who hastened to relieve them, but their efforts were too late: the man of the cap, and he whom he would have saved, went down into the

abyss together, while the air rang with the exclamations of the spectators, whose shout was heard even above the roaring of the wind and the raging of the water. They sank into the abyss, as Curtius is said to have sunk into the fiery gulph, and no trace remained of them.

They might, as far as human eyes could penetrate, have been said to have fallen into chaos. The vapour of the mountain, the spray, the winds, the elements, received them. Their sooty limbs, descending through the haze, shewed fainter and fainter, until the hue which it imparted to them mingled with the grey mist of the waterfall, and they vanished from human eyes for ever, engulfed perhaps in the boiling whirlpools below, buried beneath the moss of the rocks, or stretched on some bare crag, to feed the hawks and vultures which, startled at the sight of them as they rushed through the air, flew upwards in alarm, from haunts which nature has made sacred to them, and to them alone.



## CHAPTER XX.

Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd livery of the burnished sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

It would require the hand of a Raphael to paint the passions expressed on the features of the rebellious rabble who witnessed the catastrophe just detailed. The fair form of Joanna was not unworthy such an artist; nor would he have disdained the pretty face of the Quadroon, or the kind and unsophisticated feeling which it betrayed. She clasped her hands in an agony of surprise and consternation, while her mistress, already pale with grief for the death of her mother, and for her own misfortunes, swooned at a sight which staggered not a few of the men of war who had yet to cross this frightful bridge.

“They are gone—they are lost!” said Michal to the black Wowski. “Oh, heaven! what a terrible place! We never can pass the gully!—

Oh, for God's sake!" turning round to Combah, "do not drag my mistress over this fearful pass!"

"What is the lady to you?" said the king, somewhat confused at the accident, and at the loss of so valuable a comrade as him who had been wont to adonize his grim features with a laced cap. "What is Miss Guthrie to you? You are a slave; you are liable to be flogged if she pleases, or set in the stocks, or sold, if you offend her; and you have to bear all her ill humours, and to dress her, and curl her hair, and to wait on her. Why had not you better be free, and have women to wait on you, and curl your hair, and lie down at your feet? Patch and Wowski, see to the young lady."

The black king looked round in all directions, and wished inwardly that he could send the women, or at least the white one, away in peace.

"Michal," continued he, "if I were to send home your mistress, I would not part with you. If she dislikes me because I am not altogether a Christian, perhaps there is no law which would prevent my keeping you as my wife—as one of my wives, at any rate. I like you." He whispered in her ear as he took her apart—"I love you! my heart longs for you! Peace! Silence!" He saw she was about to speak. "Will you listen to me—will you live with me?"

"Oh no, no!" replied the damsel. "For

God's sake, do not talk to me in that way! If you are to be a king, do something worthy of a king; and if you are not, and will not be a Christian, at least shew that you have some religion which is better than the Christians', and do that which will shame the Christians, and make them envy you the fame you will acquire."

The king looked a little blank. "What a time," thought Michal, "to be making love; and to me! This Combah is a perfect fool."

The bridge had yet to be passed by a great proportion of the party; and after the catastrophe that had occurred, there were several so much alarmed, that they absolutely declined making the attempt, and preferred to climb the cone of the mountain among the trees that far overtopped the runaway land already described, rather than risk the dangers that hung upon this frightful passage. This circuitous mode of getting at the fortress on the other side was a very unwelcome business to the king and his bolder followers, as it caused a serious division in his forces for the time, and some hours must be expended before they could reunite at the huts opposite. Meanwhile the firing continued below; a desultory warfare, calculated to tease and irritate, as well as being fatal in some instances. And as the sound of the shots approached nearer and nearer, some of Combah's outposts, from time to

time driven in, cameal ways with a dismal tale of the number of the pursuers, and of the accuracy with which they fired, exhibiting their wounds as evidences of this fact. They had not a surgeon among them; a circumstance that, now first thought of, filled the heart of many a hero with something like fear, and encouraged them to assist in stretching what they called a *tie-tie* of tent ropes, hempen cordage, mahoe bark, and bush ropes, all spliced together, to form a little security, a guide for those who could be induced to cross the bridge.

While this was in hand, the monarch, again taking Michal aside, while he commissioned Patch and Wowski to attend her mistress, bid her give him a direct answer to his proposal. "You think me mad," said he, "to talk to you at this moment about my loving you; but, mind me! you must hold your peace; for if you betray me, in one moment I can toss you down the gully."

"Toss me down the gully!" repeated the girl, internally. "He is moon-struck."

"Look you, pretty Mrs Michal," (he himself looked cautiously around), "there is no one can hear me but yourself, amidst this roaring of the waters;—I really love you, and you shall be my wife. If you say *yes*," he continued, gazing on her black eyes, "here is an opportunity to

God's sake, do not talk to me in that way! If you are to be a king, do something worthy of a king; and if you are not, and will not be a Christian, at least shew that you have some religion which is better than the Christians', and do that which will shame the Christians, and make them envy you the fame you will acquire."

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"Look you, pretty Mrs Michal," (he himself looked cautiously around), "there is no one can hear me but yourself, amidst this roaring of the waters;—I really love you, and you shall be my wife. If you say *yes*," he continued, gazing on her black eyes, "here is an opportunity to

to let the white woman go free. The Maroons and the buckras will be here in a few minutes : we have only to send the Negroes all over the bridge before us. I will lead you ; and the white woman, with her fits and fancies, shall be left behind. We will be the last. I will cut the cord they are stretching, as we pass ; and the bridge shall be tumbled down the gully the moment we have gained the other side. The Maroons or the buckras will seize the white woman : they will get the reward ; they will take her back to her father. Will you save your mistress ? If you say no, come with me quickly—both of you—over the bridge. The rope is stretched. You have but a moment to decide !”

“I am in your power,” replied Michal, trembling. “Leave us both, Brutchie. What would be the use of my telling you lies ? I cannot bear you ; I hate you ; I am afraid of you !”

He seized her hand, and led her rather roughly to the bridge.

“Help me to carry over this white woman. And you, Brutus—quick ! here ! The buckras are coming : I saw a red coat cross the glade. Drive these foolish beasts—these Negro cowards—over the bridge. Awake, Miss Guthrie ! arise ! Is this a time to be fainting and whimpering, while the bullets are flying around us, danger before us, and death behind ? By my fa-

ther's bones, they will kill her ! Fire, all of you ! Give them ten for one ! Michal, go over the bridge."

He put her behind her mistress, whom he would even have guarded with his own body, and looked as tenderly as his burnt face would allow of.

" Michal, is it yes or no ? Will you save the life of your mistress—or will you sacrifice her ? Shall she be"—

" Hold, hold, for God sake, Brutchie ! Let me stay with her till the white men come up, and then I will follow you. I cannot desert her here !"

" Save yourself," said Joanna. " Never mind me. Better let me be killed by the guns of the soldiers, than remain in the hands of these men !"

Her words wrung the heart of the Brutchie.

" Take her over the bridge. This Maroon will help her," cried he, addressing him. " But why—how—by heaven ! what is this ? The Maroon a buckra—a white man !"

The Maroon was indeed a white man ; and the small but incessant rain, mingled with the spray of the waterfall, had begun to bleach his painted face. The Brutchie drew his cutlass as he let go his hold of Joanna, whom he was raising from the ground, and flew at his antagonist with the fury of a game cock. Their swords met and sparkled



in the contact; while Joanna, divining but too accurately the identity of the Maroon, and the intention of his disguise, sprang from the ground, and endeavoured to throw herself between the combatants. Their swords had well nigh pierced her bosom, but for the presence of mind with which Michal restrained her. The conflict was but momentary. Combah, the monarch of the island, was disarmed, as if he had been an infant, hurled to the ground, and the sword of Fairfax was at his throat.

“Spare his life!” cried Joanna, “spare his life! We are in the hands of his people, who are worse than he is. Spare his life.”

“Oh yes, let him live!” said Michal.

Fairfax looked round him. The noise of the wind and the waterfall, the confusion in passing the ravine, the danger, and the pursuit, the firing and the whizzing of the balls which flew about them, had prevented the rest of the party from paying any decided attention to the scene while it was taking place, and rendered it impossible for those who did look on, to hear the conversation which passed, or to guess at the meaning of the scuffle: and when the spectators from the other side of the ravine had become aware that something was amiss, the Brutchie was on his legs, commanding those about him to take care of the

Maroon, or the buckra—for such he was universally found to be—and to spare his life.

The approach of the adverse party put farther parley or deliberation out of the question. Joanna was hurried over the bridge with the assistance of Fairfax; the black dames went next; and the Brutchie followed close behind the beautiful Quadroon, amidst a shower of bullets, one of which knocked his hat from his head, while a second grazed his ribs and drew blood from the inside of his left arm. He staggered, but recovered himself, and passed the bridge in safety, with his three captives, who were no sooner landed on the rocks beyond, than they were buried behind them, ensconced in the jungle, and effectually screened by their projections from the fire of the Maroons and soldiers, whose approach prevented the followers of Combah from destroying the bridge.

Many lives were lost at this crisis. Two or three Negroes who followed the monarch were shot on the bridge; and a fourth, tumbling over the dead body of his comrade, which hung across it, plunged with him into the gulph, notwithstanding he grasped the rope which had been supplied for their assistance. At the same moment the rope was cut by those who were even hacking with their bills at the bridge itself. Still he grasped it as he fell, and did not loose his hold till the jerk with which he reached the end of

his suspension, disabled him from farther efforts. He was dashed against the precipice he had quitted, in sight only of his own party, who revenged his death by a volley across the ravine, which mowed down three or four of the soldiers, and wounded half a dozen more. But the fire was returned ; and the soldiers, taking a hint from the Maroons, sought each a barricade—a breast-work of some rock or tree—to secure themselves from the fatal aim of the rebels, who were ultimately obliged to abandon the destruction of the bridge.

Some of the Negroes were taken prisoners on the western side of the ravine, having been afraid to cross the pass ; some escaped into the woods around and above it, where they gradually fell a prey to the guns of the Maroons, who picked off all in sight, who had attempted to make a circuit round the runaway land.

But this victory, if such it may be called, was attended with no trifling loss on the part of the conquerors ; for many of the runaway Negroes continued their fire till they were shot themselves ; knowing that they had no mercy to expect, and finding all retreat cut off, they determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible, and avenge their fate before they submitted to it ; a sort of gallantry not uncommon on such occasions, where the enslaved fight for liberty, among any of the races of man.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Dar'st thou die?

The sense of death is most in apprehension.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

HOWEVER successful the soldiers and Maroons had been in following up the rebels to their stronghold, the main purpose of the pursuit had yet to be achieved. The white damsel was still in the hands of the rebels; and what was almost as serious a calamity, though unknown to the pursuers, Mr Fairfax was her fellow prisoner, taken in disguise, and as a spy. He reckoned rightly that he had but little mercy to expect from the multitude, however the Brutchie might be disposed to grant him his life; and was preparing his mind to meet his fate with decency, when the Brutchie, who had before commanded his subjects to spare the white man's life, came behind him, and whispered to him to take heart. They were perfectly secure from the fire of the

Maroons, who dared not attempt to cross the bridge, so well defended by the rebels that no soul could pass it alive; and the women were soon seated beneath a canopy of fern and palm branches, which protected them from the rain. The figure of Fairfax was sadly grotesque, resembling in colour one of Jacob's lambs, though his eyes might have betrayed to an intelligent spectator something of the emotion and the resolution which animated his bosom. If they killed him, what would be the fate of Joanna? If they spared his life, how could he still rescue her from her ravishers, before she could have been sacrificed to the brutal appetite of one of them at least? And the pretty and affectionate Michal, who sat by the side of her mistress, and strove to comfort her, while her own heart seemed ready to break, what must become of her? What would she think of the violence to which she must submit? Would *she* rather die than yield to it? For Joanna, he felt assured, dreadful and desperate as the alternative, would rather be precipitated down the ravine, or fall beneath the musquets of either party, than become the victim of a Negro's passion: and if need were—if there were no other alternative—no chance of escape—down that precipice would he leap with her. They were not so closely guarded but that they might run to the brink of the rocks before any

one could stop them. And there seemed no chance of escape: notwithstanding the assurance of the Brutchie, the rest of the Negro council, if they may be so called, began to clamour for the execution of the white man. The circumstance of his disguise had excited a feeling of indignation in their bosoms, in addition to the revenge which they already meditated against the white population; and the fury of the battle in which they had just engaged, left them not one jot of mercy to extend to such an enemy in their power.

There were various modes of execution proposed—decapitation—crucifixion: one would have hewn him in pieces with a bill-hook, or hanged him with a rope, which constituted one of his offensive weapons, being formed into a lasso after the fashion of those in Peru, whither he had been transported, some years before, for threatening the life of his master in Jamaica. Another proposed to hurl him down the gully; and a third would have had him shot. All seemed impatient for his death, except Combah, who insisted that he should not be killed without a trial; a preliminary which very few were willing to grant. Indeed the Brutchie, fearing he might be torn in pieces, gave him a cutlass, which he snatched from a comrade, and bid him defend his life, if there were need to do so, while he himself ex-

claimed aloud to his subjects, that the white man might have killed him, and did not.

“I owe him a life,” continued he. “You shall not put him to death. Hear him speak, at least. Speak, Mr Fairfax:—and if any one of you dare touch his skin, or shed a drop of his blood, till he has been heard and tried, I will fire this musket through the heart of him that does so, and Hamel shall curse him and all his family!”

The Brutchie had his hands full of business. The noise of the elements, the gabbling of the Negroes, the firing of the enemy and of his own party, caused such an union of uproar, that he was obliged to speak at the top of his voice, and could not depend on his hearing to guard against any portion of the mischief he dreaded. His eyes were occupied with a scene affecting even to him: Joanna, on her knees, implored the compassion of Fairfax. She had taken his blackened hand in her own, and while she kissed it with a passion bordering on madness, she entreated him to save her from the violence of these merciless men.

“There is no hope, Fairfax! Death has no terrors: think not of it. Kill me. By the memory of your own dear mother—by all, by every recollection—faithful friend, husband—lover—brother! Oh! we shall be happy in an-

other world! Strike!" She kissed his hand again. "It will be heaven's mercy"—

The Brutchie was near enough to hear this; and Michal, at his feet, was offering to devote herself for him she adored—(such is the perverseness of destiny)—and vowed that, to save Fairfax, she would be whatever the black king desired!

It was at the command of his sable majesty, that Fairfax, holding the hand of Joanna, who still knelt beside him, addressed the black rascals who seemed to pant for his last breath.

"Hear me! This young lady is my wife: we have been promised to one another since we were children. You stole her away; I disguised myself to get her back again, because she is mine. She loves me, and I love her. I never wronged any one of you, nor did she. And which of you, who calls himself a man, would not have done as I have done?"

This pithy speech affected those who heard it; but the noise and confusion prevented it from reaching the ears of those who, farther removed from the stage on which these actors were performing, trusted only to their eyes for an assurance of the scene;—and who can believe his eyes? They clamoured for the execution of the youth; and one or two muskets would have been discharged at him, but that the incessant rain had rendered most of the firelocks useless. Never-



theless, the clouds had begun to break, and the thunder, which gave proof of it, added its clamour to the confusion that already reigned. The lightning seemed to cleave the very air breathed by the performers (we may so call them,) followed instantly by such a clang, that a stranger, unused to these tropical explosions, would have fancied the world at its crisis as the mingled din overwhelmed his hearing. It is in this fashion that the storms of Jamaica subside.

The monarch, always master of himself, had fired his musket on one of his rebellious subjects, and was denouncing the rest of the refractory as a gang of brute beasts, mules, steers, and asses, while he endeavoured to detain Fairfax, who, leading Joanna with his left hand to the brink of the precipice, defended her, with the cutlass in the right, from the grasp of several who would have laid hold of her. Michal still clung to the Brutchie, around whom the rabble were closing fast; and they had already gained the verge of the rocks, almost in view of the enemy, when a flash of lightning seemed to sever him from her hold. He reeled—he might be said to have whirled round on the top of the crag; yet he recovered himself, though but for an instant, and put his right hand on his heart, while with his left he appeared to wave a farewell to Fairfax.

The thunder which followed convulsed every individual of the rebels, as well as the unhappy lovers. They were many of them struck to the earth, but Combah was precipitated into the abyss.

“He was shot,” cried one of the Negroes, as the king vanished amidst the spray. “He was killed by a bullet: I saw the blood stream through his fingers from his heart. It was not the thunder.”

“Stand off, villains!” exclaimed the party-coloured prisoner, still fighting his way to the edge of the precipice.—“A moment and we are free!” (These last words were addressed to Joanna.) “It *was* the thunder—Heaven’s vengeance that will overtake ye all!—Oh, Joanna! God of mercy, what an alternative! Leap with me! Leap!”

The young lady had fainted at his feet; he held her hand, or rather his own was yet convulsively grasped in hers. Michal had caught her garments as she fell, and would have dragged her back from the precipice.

“I cannot shed her blood,” said he. “Michal, let go your hold! Would you save her? For what, for what?”

The Quadroon replied only by a look that would have wrung the heart of Fairfax upon a happier occasion: it was not a reproach; it ex-

pressed neither fear nor horror. The thought which had passed through the mind of the poor girl, was to this effect—that she wished the sacrifice of herself could save Joanna for the man she loved ; but, as that seemed impossible, she was determined to die with them : and some such notion was conveyed in that look of hers to the mind of Fairfax.

The firing had ceased from the opposite side, whence the Maroons and soldiers had beheld the women as they approached the precipice, and would fain have crossed the bridge to their relief, but that it was yet too well guarded. Old Mr Guthrie descried his daughter, and a black man (as he thought) dragging her to the brink of the chasm. He saw likewise king Combah, whom he knew by his sore eyes ; and though, like the rest, somewhat confused by the shock of the lightning, he distinguished plainly enough the descent of his majesty into the watery gulph, and cried out instinctively, “ The king is dead ! the king is dead ! ” These words were repeated by a hundred voices : and Hamel, at the same moment, with a musket in his hand, and his red turban on his head, made his appearance among the rebels, and commanded, by gestures as much as by his voice, that the firing should cease.

A ray of hope beamed on the heart of the widowed and well nigh childless father.

“She lives, she lives yet!” he exclaimed, his agony of passion dissolving into tears. “The Obeah man has saved her honour and her life! See, see how the rebellious cut-throats cringe before him! *Instar Jovis!* He treats them like the dirt they are. And ah! he kneels to Fairfax, and lays his master’s hand on his own head!”

The clouds were dissipating apace; the thunder was expended; and the sun in its splendour burst out upon the mountain, the rocks, and the waterfall augmented by the rain. It lightened up the figures of this grand landscape, and displayed to either party but too palpably the dreadful situation from which the females were relieved.

Joanna was assisted to the bridge by Fairfax and the black women, while Hamel conducted the pretty Quadroon, her features yet retaining some expression of the passions which had agitated her artless bosom. He called from the rebel quarters, that there should be a truce, and that no Maroon or soldier should attempt to pass the bridge, or fire a shot, or interfere in any way, while the ropes were repairing to enable Miss Guthrie to return back to her father. A shout of assent from the besiegers encouraged their late opponents to proceed to work. The ropes were refitted; and the Obeah man, preceding the party which conveyed the young lady and her

maid across the ravine, delivered her to the arms of her parent. There was a wildness in his manner little corresponding with his usual habits. His eyes were bloodshot, and the muscles of his mouth were somewhat inflamed with passion.

"I told you, mistress," said the Quadroon in a low voice, "that you might trust this man. He has been faithful."

"He has indeed!" said Joanna in reply.

The Obcah man heard the dialogue, though not intended for him. He put his hand to his heart, and heaved a deep sigh; but he spoke not. His eyes were fixed for a moment on the pale yet conscious features of Miss Guthrie. He then looked round the circle of Maroons and soldiers who stood admiring him—for they saw he was no ordinary man in the estimation of his fellow Negroes—waved a submissive sort of adieu to his master and Mr Guthrie; and turning quietly round, strode over the perilous bridge with the confidence of one indifferent to fear, and with an assurance scarcely belonging to his advanced years.

The rebels immediately cut away the ropes and the trees which constituted the bridge, and it sank, like the wretched beings who had preceded it, in silence to the abyss below.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Now for our mountain sport : up to yon hill :  
Your legs are young ; I'll tread these flats.

CYMBELINE.

THE Obeah man, perfectly familiar with all the passes of the Blue Mountain, and indeed with all the wildernesses of that part of Jamaica, had arrived at the retreat of the rebels by an obscure route, known to few besides himself, at the most fortunate moment to save his master, and the young lady whom his master loved. The influence he had acquired over his fellow Negroes by means of his superior talents, his spells, and his magic, had rendered him a person of more consequence in the island than the sovereign monarch whom the rebels had chosen to accept, partly at his hands, partly at the recommendation of the preacher Roland. The orders of the king had been disputed without hesitation ;

but his high priest, in addition to his human powers, and his mortal weapons, carried with him the vengeance of heaven, and, according to the fears of the Negroes, that of hell likewise. As absolute as Cromwell with the members of the Long Parliament, his conduct served as one instance more to shew that a religious, or rather a superstitious influence, is the most powerful weapon which can be put into the hands of any man, whether to govern an enlightened or an unenlightened mob.

No sooner had the bridge been destroyed, than the rebels, feeling themselves in comparative safety, began a consultation as to their future procedure. The wisest (in their own estimation) presented themselves for this purpose, whilst the youngsters were ordered to bury the dead, and, with the women, to attend to the wounded. The Obeah man was requested to give his advice, and to take upon himself the direction of their movements; but he had seen too clearly the inefficacy of any attempt to command subordination, except by means of his religious tricks—if they deserved that epithet; and his respect on that score, as he well knew, depended much, if not altogether, on the caprice of the multitude. A Christian preacher, or an hour's success, might divest him of the now unlimited influence which these misfortunes had conferred on him. He de-

clined, on the score of his age, his cares, and his being obliged to set his master free when he was in their hands; a deed, he said, which heaven demanded of him, although it was a fatal blow to the conspiracy. Moreover, he told them, he had a forewarning that their enterprize would fail; and, to the surprise and consternation of many of his audience, he recommended to them, either to return to their masters; to separate, and secrete themselves in the woods; or to get off the island altogether as well as they could.

“For himself,” he said, “his life was in their hands, for he had violated his engagement in delivering up Mr Fairfax; but he had stopped the effusion of blood; and he felt assured, that by that act he could (if they chose he should do so) stipulate successfully for a pardon to every one of them who would come and surrender himself by a given period. Nay, more; he thought he could stipulate for their being transmitted off the island to Sierra Leone, or to some of the British plantations on the continent of America, where they would belong to king George, and serve him as soldiers or sailors. As to these points, he was ready to serve them with his talents and advice. If they meant to stand out in arms against the government of the country, he had done with them, and with all things else; and if they pleased, they might take



his life, or let him go home to his cave, and die there."

This speech met with much approbation, especially from the wounded and from the women, who found sufficient excuse for his late conduct, and begged him, with tears and groans, to go and intercede with the buckras for the lives and the pardon of all the survivors.

He would have obeyed them on the spot; but the bridge being destroyed, he had no means of coming again to the speech of Mr Guthrie, or of his master Mr Fairfax, but by the roundabout way which he had chosen for his approach to this wild spot, unless he could bargain for a parley with the enemy on the other side, and obtain permission and assistance to construct a new bridge. But this he thought again would hardly be practicable, as in all probability those gentlemen, the only persons with whom he could hope to treat, had already begun their march homewards.

The Obeah man resolved to take the road by which he had arrived, followed by those Negroes who chose to attend him, and accompanied by the two women, Patch and Wowski, whose influence, they thought, would avail almost as much as his own, in consequence of the consideration which they had shewn for the fate of Joanna.

Let us now see what had been done by Mr

Fillbeer, and the party of soldiers who had stationed themselves at the deserted mansion in the wilderness.

After rummaging among the ruins, and examining the cellar and the rest of the premises, the man-mountain—conscious of the evil report which attached to the place—recommended to the officer commanding the little party, to scour the woods around the amphitheatre, and mounting upon the craggy pinnacles that enclosed it, to take what reconnoissance these might afford, as far at least as the eyes of his men could penetrate through the jungle. But the captain was of opinion that the soldiers, whose faces were heated to the colour of their jackets, had already exhausted themselves sufficiently with their march, to endanger their lives from an attack of the island fever; and proposed instead, that the Negroes should perform this service, with the fat man at their head, while he and his own men should spread the canvass they had brought over the unroofed and disconsolate-looking dwelling, and proceed to cook themselves some hot dinner.

Fillbeer smiled at the proposition. “I mount the pinnacle!” said he. “Not if Satan would take me there. Look at my bulk. I should be food for the carrion crows before I had clambered half way up; and so out of breath, that they might pick out my eyes before I were

dead, for any resistance I could make. But please yourself, my noble captain. Your meal may perhaps be a little broken in upon ; or the gentry who have evidently been here of late, as you may see by their footmarks and their fires, and the stink of gunpowder, and rum, and tobacco, which is so rife among the ruins, may give you such a desert as you will not perhaps think you merit. Here seem to have been rare pranks performed upon this plain, where, according to report, Mr Roland came to convert all the runaway Negroes at once. Dancing, I see, must have engaged them in some measure ; for only behold how the sand is trampled, and these feathers and rags still scattered about ! They have had a heathen priest among them, I suspect. Perhaps that execrable Hamel, with his charms, and drugs, and trumpery. Well, sir !” still addressing himself to the captain, “ I see you are bent upon eating and drinking, and so am I ; and as to sending these Negroes to rummage among the bushes by themselves”—

“ You fear to trust them,” said the captain, interrupting him.

“ Trust them !” replied Filbeer, “ trust them ! Why certainly, they might take a fancy to join any runaways with whom they should happen to fall in ; or they might set off and run back to their houses, for they do not like being shot at,

and they are not devoted to the buckra soldiers, as you may have understood. But the main fact is, that they are altogether afraid of danger, and will not incur it except for those they love ; and even then, sir, you must give them arms. Now, I presume, you will not disarm your veterans to put weapons into the hands of these barbarians."

" Why do you call them barbarians ?" said the captain, fanning himself with his hat.

" Why !" replied Fillbeer, applying the sudarium to his smooth features. " Some of the same sort as these mounted me to a gibbet but two days ago—at least to a tree—where they would have hanged me but for the interposition of Providence."

The captain could not refrain from smiling. " Let us," said he, " refresh the men and ourselves a little, and we will then examine the bushes, and post a sentry or two on the highest peaks ; although I see but little use in doing so ; for what eyes can penetrate a hundred yards or a hundred feet into this forest ? A red-coat on one of these rocks will only be a mark for the rebels."

" Oh !" replied Fillbeer, affecting to be satirical, " ever while you live send red-coats to bush-fight in the woods of the tropics ; and cocked hats for the officers, and glazed caps for the men ; never mind how much the sun roasts their faces, or how cumbrous the caps are in such an enterprise. Button up the men, and let them be hot.

But come, 'let us eat and drink,' as St Paul recommended in such cases, 'for to-morrow we die.' "

"Like enough," replied the captain: "there are more blows to be expected here than dollars—more danger than glory, and no great prospect of booty or prize-money."

"No, captain," replied the Quinbus Flestrin, as he seated himself among the ruins. "Here you may have your prayer, your toast—'A bloody war, and a sickly season.' A most unchristian invocation, to be sure."

"We must not stand for Christianity," replied the soldier; "interest, my fat friend, promotion, rank;—we must do the states' duty. It is the road to all that Christians desire, whether fighters or preachers."

"Humph," ejaculated Fillbeer, "I believe it is; and yet I doubt the lawfulness of bringing up men to kill one another—mercenaries that hack and hew for pay. A Christian nation, an evangelical nation, ever meddling with the consciences of all its members in some way or other, yet trains up a proportion of its youth in the art of *massacring*; that is, the science of killing most at the least expense, and with the greatest certainty! And this trade is respected above all others; nay, kings and princes patronize it, and grace it with all their influence; to say nothing of lavishing

upon its members all the finery of the earth—stars, ribbons, knighthood, orders, companionships, and what not. Even monarchs who have never seen a shot fired, except at hares and pheasants, must wear the costume of their mercenaries upon state occasions, and bedizen themselves with tags and tassels, despising the garb of peace, and the more sober, and quite as appropriate, garments of a gentleman and a philosopher—of a man of peace.”

“Hah! my boy!” said the captain, patting him on the shoulder, “you’re right, and kings are right. You would make a preacher methinks—a bishop, by all that’s fat and heroic! Come, don’t be offended; the capons begin to smell savoury, and the porter invites: if Quashie will let us eat in peace, we’ll drink to his health and prosperity.”

During this dialogue, which was interrupted occasionally by various orders which the officer communicated to his deputies, the men had piled their arms, taken off their knapsacks and their jackets, and began to make provision for their dinner and for their temporary abode. A good fire had been kindled, and a score of pullets and capons, which had been brought up by the Negroes, impaled on wooden spits, now smoked around it. The plantains were piled about the embers, and the camp-kettles seethed with junks of beef and pork. The only want was that of an

appetite to devour all these good things ; many of the men, not inured to the climate, having experienced such great fatigue in the march, that they sighed in vain for the calls of hunger, and strove to excite their fainting stomachs with hot coffee, which lent its fragrance to the perfumes of the dinner. A tent or two had been pitched on the barbecue, and pieces of canvass, as before observed, had been spread over some of the ruins ; but as these could only guard the soldiers from the sun, and would yield a passage to the first shower of rain with which the elements might favour them, it was necessary to adopt a different covering, to some part of the building at least ; and the two fan-palms, noticed in a previous part of this history, were devoted, by general consent, to the purpose of thatching a portion of the house. Spars and joists lay among the rubbish, which some of the Negroes quickly accommodated to the walls ; while others, to save the trouble of felling the palms, clambered easily up their taper shafts, with bill-hooks to trim off the branches, or rather leaves, from the tufts which formed their summits.

Meanwhile, the captain and his two subalterns seated themselves alongside of fat Fillbeer, and fell to eating with as much good humour as the scene would admit of, and drank to one another's healths with all the conviviality usual on such

occasions, while their men followed their noble example, and detached themselves in little messes, in various parts of the amphitheatre; and the Negroes brought them their refreshments, as they required them, from the house where the headquarters had been established. Some of the soldiers were imprudently bathing in the rivulet which flowed beneath the rocks; and there were not in all more than three sentries under arms, and even these were seated on the grass in the shade at their different posts, little apprehensive of any attack, or of any enemy being near. The fat man, who had loosened his waistcoat and removed his neckcloth, for the benefit of breathing as he eat and being at more liberty than usual, turned up his little twinkling eyes to the summits of the palms, which the Negroes were trimming with great perseverance. These trees grew close beside the house, on the east side of it; and as the breeze blew fresh, the ex-brewer was apprehensive that some of the branches might in their fall invade his homestead; and, as he looked up from time to time at the havoc committed aloft, a fresh idea sprung up in his mind.

“Can you see over the rocks?” cried he to the Negroes.

“Yes, master, towards Blue Mountain.”

“And what can you see there?”



"Nothing, master."

"Can you see the mountain?"

"No, master. All is clouds and mist between us and the mountain, but it is clearing away."

"What *can* you see?" rejoined Fillbeer: "Can you see anything nearer?"

"Nothing but bush, and trees, and a pigeon flying about."

"A pigeon!"

"Yes, two or three more—twenty pigeons—flying about."

"Something disturbs them," said the ex-brewer. "Watch the spot. There must be some one in the forest there."

"The pigeons," continued the Negro, "keep flying more and more this way."

The soldiers had begun to prick up their ears, and the captain had rather hurried down the two last-bumpers of Madeira. Fillbeer felt for his neckcloth.

"They must be far away yet," said he.

"Oh yes," replied the Negro, attending to the remark, "one, two, three miles."

He continued chopping, and the brewer took another glass of Maderia, which did not render him altogether as pot-valiant as he expected. He took another. "Master," exclaimed two of the Negroes at the same time, "I see a man."

“How many men?” said the captain.

“One man,” replied the Negroes, “and a woman.”

“A woman!” cried the brewer in a flurry (a new light breaking in upon him.) “A woman!”

“One, two women,” replied he on the tree; “and three men.”

“Can you see them plain?”

“Yes—no—they are hid again in the bushes. One of them was dressed in a black cloak.”

The face of Fillbeer became ten times more rosy than the reddest rose. “A black cloak!” said he internally, not daring to question the Negro further; “a black cloak! Five hundred and thirty-three pounds, six and eight-pence. This is the queen of Sheba bringing presents to Solomon! This is the daughter of Solomon Guthrie!—Joanna, and her ravisher, and her maid!”

The captain soliloquized aloud—“A black cloak! A prize, by G—d! The old planter’s daughter in her mourning weeds. Can you see them yet?”

“I saw them again for a moment,” replied the Negro; “they are out of sight again—and now they cross the top of the hill, and are going to the gully where the water runs down to Red Castle Mill.”

“Hearkye, blackee!” shouted the captain. “Are you sure it is a black cloak? Is it not a black woman?”

“It might be a black woman: I suppose it was,” replied the Negro, “or a Quadroon.—(“A Quadroon!” sighed Quinbus to himself.)—“I could not tell; but I am sure she had a black something on, for I saw it wave in the wind. I see it now again; and she has got an umbrella.”

“An umbrella!” exclaimed Fillbeer.

“An umbrella!” echoed the captain. “What shall we do?”

“They are gone now out of sight,” continued the Negro. “I shall see them no more. They are in the gully.”

“Stay, stay!” cried the captain to the Negroes, seeing them seized with a sudden fancy to come down. “Stay a moment!”

“No, master, no—no use,” replied one of them; the other two, who had been his companions, seeming in too great a hurry to answer. “No use, no use.”

“What the devil,” said Fillbeer, rising in a rage, “brings them down so fast? Are they bent on catching the girl? Stop, you fools, and get up the tree again.”

“No, no!” replied the Negro he had seized, who spoke without seeming to heed him. “Let me go! let me go!”

The two others had decamped already with all the speed of which they were capable, and were racing down the path from the arena.

“ Let me go !” continued the Negro ; “ I shall be killed.”

He got behind fat Fillbeer.

“ Let me go, please God, master. There are other Negroes in the bushes, on the rocks. They pointed guns at us. Let me go—let me go !”

He ran from them after his comrades ; and the captain shouted, “ To your arms, soldiers !” At the same moment a volley was fired from the heights around, and a score of ragged and half-naked Negroes rushed into the arena, and made for the arms piled up, as described before, some of which they had the good fortune to secure. The captain was shot in the face, and Fillbeer in the *derrière*. Fortunately neither shots were dangerous, and the latter scarcely drew blood. The soldiers, who had their side-arms, made uglier work with the Blacks, many of both parties biting the dust, for the rebels were provided with knives : but as they were all mixed up in the scuffle, those of the assailants who remained on the heights discontinued their fire for fear of killing their companions ; while the captain and those around him entrenched themselves behind the walls of the house, whither the whole party of the military rallied themselves at last, saving those who had fallen in the fray, and kept a continued fire where the bushes could harbour an enemy, until they had silenced half of the rebels,

or until the rebels had thought fit to desist. It seemed an afterthought, that the Blacks had had no immediate intention of attacking, and would have deferred their attempt till the evening, the twilight, or the night, but that they were discovered by the palm-cutters in the trees, whom they might have shot, had they been so disposed. The possession of the arms had been their chief object.

The captain of the company, in some confusion from his wound, and the surprise which he had suffered, for want perhaps of attending to Fill-beer's advice, now looked around for that gentleman, whom at last he descried riding away at his horse's speed, without his hat, which he had lost, and followed by the rest of the Negroes who had attended him to the ruined settlement. How he had escaped appeared incomprehensible to those who remained ; or how he had prevailed on the Negroes to hoist him upon his beast ; for without their help he had never disengaged himself from *terra firma*, as it was but too evident. The officers shouted after him, and taxed him with cowardice ; but he had no ears for aught which they could say. Fear was behind, and hope before him—(the hope of obtaining the prize.) He did but point to his wound, as he galloped off, congratulating himself in secret that he had left the soldiery with their hands too full of work to in-

terfere with him. "Let them perish by the sword," said he to himself; "they who live by the sword! Faith, they will have enough of it! I have enough already. Thank God, it is no worse! Would we were down at the Bay; for we have a dismal route as yet to traverse."

So saying, and encouraging the Negroes to keep up with him, he kicked and flogged his jaded nag until it staggered about in going down the narrow pass, so that the rider was every other minute in danger of falling off into the river, or knocking out his uncovered brains against the rocks which overhung it. He had felt but little pain from his wound at first, which was not more than a contusion, the ball having struck a wall, from which it recoiled against his rear: but with the bumping on his saddle, and the heat into which he was jolted, he began now to experience some inconvenience and annoyance, and was a little alarmed lest, becoming unable to continue his career, he might lose the chance of the century of doubloons which glittered before his imagination.

The Negroes continued in his company, notwithstanding the expedition he employed—nay, sometimes (by cutting off the angles of the ravines) were in advance of him; while he, like an old huntsman, cheered them along in a sort of demi-voice, for he feared to alarm the echoes of

the woods or rocks among which he was fain to scamper, lest the ruffian Combah and his female companions should be made aware of his near approach. But although Combah was far beyond his hearing, and those whom he sought had not yet a suspicion of him, the clatter of his horse's heels had betrayed him to three or four runaways who were posted on the bank of the Rio Grande, to which he was hastening, where the rivulets which turned the mill of the Red Castle estate disembogued from the ravine in which the Negro from the palm-tree had seen the black cloak disappear.

These Negroes were skulking about as spies or scouts, and knew as yet nothing of the death of their king; but as they saw Fillbeer, a white man, bare-headed, racing away from the deserted settlement to which he had attended the soldiers in the morning, they concluded that he was either flying for his life from a defeat, or to get a fresh supply of troops. With this impression, they made bold to post themselves in his way, and signed to him with their hands to stop, one of them affecting to present a musket at him.

"Hold, there! Get out of the way, you villain!" cried the alarmed attorney, endeavouring to pull up his tired horse. "What do you want with me, an unarmed man? Spare my life! I am undone—ruined—exiled—one of you—almost an

outlaw. Stop my horse!" He pulled with all his might; but his beast had got so much headway, that it was in vain to tug at him, the sole effect he produced being to pull himself and the saddle over his horse's ears, where the Negro received him, more courteously than he could have expected, in his arms.

"Where do you come from?" said the Black. "Speak! Where are you going, and what's your business? Speak—make haste!"

"Give me time to get my breath," replied Fillbeer, panting and gasping; "I am wounded."

"Wounded! where?"

"Here, on this—this thigh."

The Negro still held him; and his companions, espying those who attended Fillbeer coming up, proposed to kill him, and throw him down the dingle: and although he begged hard for his life, it would have gone harder with him, but that in the auspicious moment the wizard Hamel leaped down from the rocks above, and bid them desist on pain of death!

"Touch him at your peril!" said the Obeah man. "Begone, and provide for your safety. All is lost! Begone, I say!"

The Negroes slunk into the bushes, as if it had been a deity who commanded them, and vanished from the eyes of Fillbeer.

"Soh!" said he, recovering his wind: "There is some virtue in this fiend. I thank you for my



life. Set me down on the ground, and let me get my breath. Hamel, you have a power, but it is the power of the Evil One. All is lost, as you say. The soldiers are, by this time, all murdered at M'Lachlan's. A gang of your countrymen, of rebellious cut-throats, burst in upon them from the rocks and woods around. They shot the captain in the face; I saw his blood! They shot me here, in the—the behind part of my thigh. See what a rent they have made in my clothes! All is over. Let me escape with the remains of life, and leave this accursed island to its more accursed inhabitants—Pagans or Christians! Would they had been Pagans still! They have the worst qualities of both—of all—of the whole human race; the tricks of savages, the courage and the cruelty of the most refined, civilized—I may say—religious nations. Oh, heaven! deliver me out of the hands of these mine enemies! Where is Miss Guthrie?"

The fat man looked around, as if suddenly recollecting the prize for which he had been riding, and caught a glimpse of Patch and Wowski, who were peeping down from the rocks above.

"The black cloak! the black cloak!" cried he. The women had vanished the instant they observed that Fillbeer beheld them. "The black cloak is Miss Guthrie's!"

“It is,” replied the wizard, calmly.

“Good heaven, Hamel!” rejoined the other; “give her up to me. Let me restore her to her parents—aye, even to her lover, though he has undone me.”

He raised himself, as he spoke, from off the earth on which he had been seated, though, by the time he was on his fat legs, he found they were hardly sufficient to support him, and placed his hand instinctively on his wound, while he reconnoitered the rocks on which he had caught a glimpse of the petticoats. Hamel had sent one of his Negroes to bid the women descend.

“Give her to me,” continued Fillbeer. “Let the last act of my commission here be to make my peace with Mr Fairfax, and to oblige Mr Guthrie; for I shall decamp. Nay, you may grin, Mr Conjuror; but I shall march.”

“You will march, master Attorney—yes, you will march. Well, you shall have all you desire. Here is Miss Guthrie’s cloak, or veil rather. You did not think I had the young lady to give away, did you?”

The brewer stared as if he had seen a ghost, looking at the black legs of Wowski as she approached, and then at Patch, and then again at the wizard; and after that, examining the two women more critically. At last he muttered between his teeth, “Incarnate fiend! Not even

Belzebub is more d——d. The villain! he has murdered her, or sold her! Gracious heaven!" (turning up his eyes) "is this thy providence? And hast thou left the innocent, the virtuous, the helpless, in the fangs of these demons?"

He heaved a deep sigh, and wiped his clammy features, while he continued apostrophizing the spirit of the universe, and now and then adverting mentally to the discomfiture of his hopes, and to his despair respecting the hundred doubloons. "Is my own life safe?" added he, in a sort of under voice. "This ruffian has long owed me a grudge." He cast a timid glance at Hamel, who was engaged in replacing the saddle on the horse, having meanwhile given his musket to one of the women; for the Negroes who had attended him hither had taken their departure. "No; he cannot mean me harm, or he might have left me to those rascals who stopped me. Yet what has he done with Miss Guthrie?"

The Obeah man overheard part of this soliloquy, but declined paying any particular attention to it. He had replaced the saddle on the fat man's steed, and assisted him, whether he would or would not, to mount. In short, he hoisted him on his beast, and very courteously invited him to lead the way to the rocks that overlooked Belmont, to his own watchman's abode—his cave.

"I lead the way," said Fillbeer, in alarm, "to

your cave! What have I to do there?" (The Obeah man examined the lock of his gun.) "You will not murder me?" continued the brewer. "It is true, I am in your power; but you that have saved—given me my life, cannot intend to take it away again."

"Your life is not safe except you follow me, be assured," said Hamel. "I have business for you at my cave. I want you, and you must come. Even the Negroes who attended you have fled. You are alone, and all resistance would be vain: but in my company you have nothing to fear. Or, if you prefer it, give me your promise to go with these women to the cave, and I will not trouble you with my presence."

"Not so black as he is painted," muttered Fill-beer. "A pestilence on his Paganism—a demon may have one redeeming quality. I shall go, Mr Hamel," he added aloud; "I give you my word."

"Be it so," replied the wizard. "You shall have no cause for fear or regret; but in case of danger from any strange interlopers who may be on the look-out, this woman shall carry the gun for your use."

"Nay, nay, give it me," cried the fat man. "I can carry it easily across my saddle-bow. My honour is pledged."

"Take it then," rejoined the Obeah man; "and remember, if you see danger or want assistance, whistle aloud: my comrades are within hearing in the woods."

“ The devil they are ! ” said the fat man, as if alarmed at the circumstance. “ But I cannot whistle ; I have no breath to spare. I could no more whistle in such a case than I could fly.”

The Obeah man, as if heedless of this observation, had darted again into the bushes, leaving Quinbus with his Amazonian escort, screwing up his lips into the least dimensions of which they were capable, and vainly puffing out by starts the little wind which he could spare from his fat corpse, to effect the sound which was to assure him of succour in case of need.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Aye, but to die, and go we know not where !  
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot !  
This sensible warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod ; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice !  
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
This pendent world,—or to be worse than worst  
Of those whom lawless and uncertain thoughts  
Imagine howling.—’Tis too horrible !

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

WE left the ill-fated Roland sleeping within the precincts of the Obeah man’s abode, beside the little lagoon environed with inaccessible crags. His slumber was neither sound nor refreshing. A raging fever had taken possession of him, the consequence of the fatigues of mind and body which he had suffered, the excesses and vicissitudes of which he had lately been the sport.

The sun was shining bright when he awoke from this sort of stupor rather than from sleep ; and he surveyed, with the calmness of despair,

the rocks that imprisoned him ; for he felt a conviction that the hand of death was on him, and that although he had escaped the murderous passion of the monarch whom he had anointed, and the more horrifying apparatus of the gallows, yet his time was come ! He had to surrender up his breath to the Being from whom he had received it ; and, according to the vulgar creed, to give an account of his conduct while he had enjoyed it. Not that he had formerly considered himself accountable for all the works done in the flesh. Like many of his predecessors in his peculiar persuasion, he was averse to judge his actions by the standard of reason alone. He had made a merit of obeying impulses which he flattered himself were divine ; he had felt affections which he considered as inspirations, and had assured himself of his election and illumination. Considering himself the servant, the soldier, of the most high God, he had never questioned the motives which induced him to effect this or that purpose, or halted to consider what might be their consequences. His confidence in the Almighty had never faltered ; his faith in a crucified Redeemer had been imperturbable. He had always been satisfied that he was right ; and, without referring to his mortal career, anticipated a crown of glory in the world to come.

We may suppose that during these assurances he was in a sound mind, for now that a mortal

sickness had attacked him, every one of these impressions vanished. His brain was in a state of excitement bordering on delirium; and while his body, becoming more and more feeble, had parted with every passion that had been wont to interfere with it, this, the sensorium, the soul, lay at the mercy of the spirit which had summoned it from this life. In short, his conscience began to be troubled, and he hesitated to assure himself of the infallibility of his former hopes. Yet whom could he consult, or where could he look for assistance in this melancholy hour, estranged—exiled—from the haunts of civilized men; cooped up in a sort of prison; wasting with exhaustion; dying of disease? In vain did his troubled memory conjure up the recollection of past assurances, the triumphs of his faith and of his fortune, when something like prosperity on earth had smiled upon him; when he was believed, and believed himself, to be the deputy of his God, beyond the reach of temptation, beyond the chance of falling into nought. His past humility was arrayed now, before his imagination, in the garb of pride, of insolence to all other Christians—of intolerance. He had fancied himself a more useful servant, more zealous, faithful, more religious, more important, than a host of the merely virtuous and moral followers of Christ. He thought that, in affecting to engross



the merits and the honour of *true worship*, he had been merely soothing and sacrificing to his own vanity. He felt that he had been a despot in religion; arbitrary, unjust, tyrannical, vain, selfish, even when most sincere. Then crowded on his mind the guilty deeds of the flesh; and as every circumstance of his excesses appeared in review before him, each seemed a demon striving to goad him for his cruelty, his sensuality, his merciless pertinacity in worldly schemes. The chain was counted, link by link—the chain of all his misdeeds—the chain that had bound him to the earth, and that now seemed to bind him to the bottomless pit,—*the level lake of brimstone!* The fetters were rivetted on his soul, and wound around him by the Arch Enemy of mankind—the apostate spirit—the *gran' Diavol del Inferno* in his own proper person. The heart of Roland, which had been used of late to throb, now beat as if his bosom were too narrow to confine it; and his brain, almost riven with the conviction, began to wander as in a wilderness. He raved on Mrs Guthrie, on the name of Fairfax, and Joanna; at one while invoking the mercy of Heaven, at the next moment uttering sighs and murmurs of despair. The rocks that imprisoned him reverberated these sounds of woe; and whenever their silence was restored, the solitude of the scene inspired him with fresh inducements to

lamentation. The fever in his veins awaked the recollection of the fire he had kindled, and the frightful figure of his delegate again stood before him—the Negro whom we have called the Duppie.

“Samuel! Samuel!” said he, (his apostrophe partaking of invocation as well as soliloquy,) “thou shouldst have disobeyed me, or thou shouldst have died, or I should have died, before my soul was blackened like this throbbing, hateful heart! Must thou too rise in judgment against me? Oh God! How dreadful is this world! How terrible is that which is to come! Samuel! Samuel!”

In the midst of the apostrophe, the diving Duppie, known to Roland by the name of Samuel, arose from the little lagoon on which the eyes of the despairing man were fixed, and stood on the shore before him. The bubbling of the troubled waters had first arrested the attention of Roland; and as he saw the Negro form emerging from the pool, his fancy, again wandering with alarm, presented to itself the idea of a demon ascending from the condemned pit, and he thought again, for a moment or two, that he had already passed the gates of death.

The Negro and the preacher exchanged a look of recognition. The languor and the sadness of death were on the features of the last, and those of the former betrayed no sign of triumph. There

was a pause of many minutes before the silence was broken, the Duppie standing in a fixed yet rather respectful position, while the gaze of Roland was bent upon him, watching the drops of water which fell from his head or from the skirts of his black shirt, and trickled down his ebony looking legs.

“Samuel,” said the preacher, at length breaking silence, “what wouldst thou?”

“You called me, Roland,” replied the Duppie. “I heard you plainly ask for Samuel.”

“You have betrayed me,” replied the preacher with a languid sigh; “but I forgive you: I am dying—dying, as I have deserved, without one friend to soothe my conscience in my last moments, to comfort this expiring body, or to close my eyes when I am dead! Oh, Samuel! Say at least that you will bury me, if only here beneath this sod. Leave me not a prey to the hawks and vultures, or to that ghastly snake that but now was wreathing its horrid folds beside me!”

“Master parson,” rejoined the Duppie, “you are not going to die.”

“Parson! parson!” re-echoed Roland, interrupting him. “Call not me parson, nor preacher, nor missionary, nor even man. I am a monster! Where did you come from? From the abyss of H——? How can you live under the water? I remember—it was you that dragged me beneath

the waves into that dungeon. Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served *myself*!—I a parson! Would to heaven that I had been a real, reasonable, conscientious, minister of the truth; ordained by some religious bishop, educated with men of honourable feelings and of generous hearts, instead of having herded with wretches, miscreants, sensual fanatics, and interested hypocrites, ever seeking whom they may devour! Samuel! tell me truly ——”

“What, master?” said the Duppie, answering with an expedition which startled the sectarian.

“Samuel! do you not abhor me? Tell me sincerely; do you not look on me as a monster—as a fiend? You, alas! who know me—am not I a horror and a shame? A firebrand plucked out of the burning, to be left as a beacon on the top of these mountains, to be a warning and a teaching to every man?”

Samuel looked down with some contempt on the wretched sufferer, and answered in a tone as little offensive as possible—“Master Roland, you *are* a bad man—a d——d rascal—to be sure; but God is good and merciful, and if you are really sorry, he will forgive you.”

“Never,” said the Missionary—“never!”

“I tell you he will,” rejoined Samuel. “All the parsons say so; and I am sure of it myself. Why, *I* forgive you, though you made me do a

great wickedness ; and God Almighty is more merciful than a poor Negro.”

The Missionary raised his head and looked the Duppie in the face, and, after heaving a deep sigh, sank down again upon the grass, apparently *in articulo mortis*. Yet, after the lapse of a few minutes, he resumed his cogitations aloud, muttering in a sepulchral tone, that Samuel had the knowledge of all the law and the prophets. “An ignorant heathen,” continued he, “preaching consolation to an expositor of the Evangelists, to a minister who has been courted and followed by the multitude—the mob whom he had led astray ! And, in his last hour, one whose credulity he had abused—poor Negro Samuel—tells him, for his comfort, that there is mercy in heaven for sinners ! Give me a cup of water to quench this burning thirst. I am dying, Samuel, but my soul is not relieved ! I tremble to think where I am going, and almost wish I had, like thee, been born a heathen ; for unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required.”

Some food had been left by the side of Roland ; and Samuel, at his request, took a calabash which had been set on the grass, filled it with water from the lagoon, and presented it to the Missionary, who drank every drop of its contents, and returned it to him for more.

“ Mine,” said he, “is the thirst of death ! But

hark! What noise was that? Oh, heaven and h——l! are these the ministers of justice come again to seize me for murder? The murder of whom—of what—of how many? Of that angel mother of the unfortunate Joanna! Horror! It is Fillbeer's voice. Is not Mr Guthrie with him?"

The Duppie, looking up to the fissure in the rock by which Roland had been introduced to the area of this lagoon, and beholding the fat paunch of the late attorney of Belmont squeezing through the narrow chink, handed with the utmost expedition the second calabash of water to his former master, and plunged headlong into the lake.

"I thank thee with my heart and with my soul," said the Missionary, grasping the calabash.

The Duppie was gone. The eyes of Roland followed him till he had disappeared beneath the bubbling fountain; and those of Fillbeer, having witnessed this finale, were rivetted with astonishment upon the undulating circles, which, breaking upon the shore in some confusion and commotion, assured him that what he saw was real.

"What's this? Who is this?" ejaculated the fat man in the pauses of his puffing and panting. "To whom do you give your heart and soul? Can I believe my eyes? Is this the Tempter, who thus has darted into the pool and vanished in its

depths? Roland, forbear: it is your death and your d—n—n!”

He would have snatched the calabash from the dying man, if he had possessed sufficient agility to reach it in time; but his bulk prevented him. The Missionary had emptied it of its contents, and lain down again in a state of exhaustion from the exertion, by the time that the fat man had waddled up to him. “Touch me not,” said he to Fillbeer: “let me depart in peace; detain not my soul. What I have done, I have done, and I am beyond the reach of the law!”

“How so?” cried the astonished and again confounded attorney. “What have you done? Have you sold yourself to hell? Have you bartered for a cup of water your right to immortality? Have you surrendered your soul?”

“Touch me not,” repeated Roland; “I am dying! It would be needless to hurry me from hence. I cannot live to satisfy the ends of justice. Let them not treat my wretched corpse with ignominy!”

By this time the Obeah man and his two attendants, Patch and Wowski, had followed Mr Fillbeer into the little area, and ranged themselves in front and around the dying man. The women knelt down at once to assist him, being moved by the compassion natural to their sex; and the

wizard, leaning on his musket, was satisfied to contemplate his fallen foe in melancholy silence; his black features rendered more sombre by the expression of his gloomy and mournful imagination.

The Missionary at length exchanged a look with him, having for some time closed his eyes, as if he feared the sight of the wizard would blast his scarcely surviving hope.

“It is even so,” said he. “Hamel! you have conquered, and you are avenged: but you may tremble in your turn.”

“Never,” replied the wizard.

“God grant it may be so!” continued Roland. “Let us exchange forgiveness.”

The black man gave him his hand, which Roland squeezed, and even put to his lips; and Hamel would have repaid this compliment, but the Missionary, quickly loosing his grasp, whispered with a convulsive shudder—“No, no—there’s blood upon it!”

“His head is gone,” said Wowski, scarcely refraining from tears, as she wiped the perspiration from his clammy face with the end of the handkerchief which she wore on her neck—“his memory is wandering.”

“Not so,” replied the Missionary. “I am still sensible, and I thank you. Alas, poor Rachel! She too was kind, faithful, and affectionate.”



He raised himself again, as if inspired by the recollection of this devoted adherent; and addressed himself with a peculiar energy to the fat man-mountain, whose portentous figure was occasionally convulsed with a mingled sympathy of pity, horror, and alarm. "Mr Fillbeer," said he, "we are in an error. No life can be pleasing to God, except it be an example useful to men; and all is vanity except the services we can render to our fellow-creatures. I believe in God; and, worthless idiot as I am, I yet dare hope for mercy through the merits of his Son!"

With these words he sank back in a mortal paroxysm, at the same moment that the waters of the lagoon, beginning to be troubled again, rolled in rapid circles from the centre to the shore, and distracted the gaze of Fillbeer from the dying man.

"It is his fiend again," said the brewer, trembling with alarm, "incensed at the mention of the name of him whom we adore."

"Whom you adore!" observed the Obeah man with a calm and inoffensive smile. "But he is no fiend who rises from the water: regard him well. Are you so silly—such a simpleton—as to believe a fiend, a devil, could appear on this or that occasion? Master Fillbeer, the Missionary is dead. You have seen him die—are you satisfied? Will you take his corpse, or will you bury it here?"

This fiend, as you fancied him, tells me I must begone from this abode."

Fillbeer was in a dreadful perspiration, arising from fear and fat, and knew not what to engage to do.

"I must leave you," said the Obeah man, preparing to go. "Resolve quickly: if you will commit your friend to the earth, this Negro shall assist you; if not, begone from hence for ever!"

"No, no!" said Fillbeer, in a fresh alarm; "Roland is dead, it is but too evident. You may leave us awhile, if you wish it, and we will inter him."

While he thus addressed the Obeah man, he fixed his gaze upon the Duppie; and although he could not account, in his own mind, for the mysterious visiting of this Negro, he was satisfied that his appearance and disappearance were not altogether supernatural.

Hamel retired. The Duppie brought a spade from the interior of the rocks, and began to dig a grave; while the women seated themselves, one at the head, and the other at the feet of Roland, and without meddling with his apparel, laid him out with becoming decency, and fanned the flies from his corpse while the work was proceeding. They offered the attorney some of the provision prepared for Roland, which he did not refuse; and

by the time that the sun had set, the body of the Missionary was committed to the earth; Fillbeer reciting over it, from memory, the service for the burial of the dead.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

What ! have you let the false enchanter 'scape ?

Oh, ye mistook, ye should have snatcht his wand  
And bound him fast.

COMUS.

THE morning had dawned, and the sun shone brightly over the Atlantic waves and the green island which they surround—the scene of our narrative—when the Obeah man, refreshed with some hours' sleep, made his appearance at the house of Mr Guthrie. He was attended by the two women, Patch and Wowski, as his intercessors, and half-a-dozen of his runaway friends, who had demanded his presence the previous afternoon, when he was summoned from the inner lagoon ; and the cavalcade (or rather procession, as all the rest of the party were pedestrians) was closed by the portentous figure of the ex-attorney, who accompanied the wizard, thus far at least, as an hostage. He was of course mounted on his steed, all other means of locomotion among the rocks

and mountains he had traversed being utterly denied him; and like a knight true to the cause for which he had taken up arms, he carried over his shoulder the black veil of Miss Joanna—the prize which she had left in her hurry at the waterfall.

Mr Fairfax was already there before them, with a crowd of guests and soldiery, besides a multitude of other persons, curious to behold this wizard, his influence having sufficed to regain possession, for her father and her lover, of the young lady whose destiny might otherwise have led her to a throne; a royalty not altogether contemptible in itself, if we consider the honourable notice which some of the European governments have bestowed on the emperor and the president of Haiti.

The Obeah man requested, and was admitted to, a private audience, wherein he bargained for his comrades that all who should surrender by a certain time should be secure in life and limb. He would have stipulated that some few more should have the privilege of quitting the island, at least of being furnished with passports; but the right of other individuals here interfered, and without permission of the governor no such indulgence could be granted.

Hamel still requested to see Miss Joanna, who came forth at his solicitation, and thanked him for the services he had rendered her.

She likewise received the black women, not refraining from tears at the recognition. One was a free woman; the other had lived the life of a free woman, (the creoles will understand this;) and both came, not to supplicate for themselves, but to intercede for many who, they said, had been induced by Roland and others to take up arms in support of the rights which Mr Wilberforce had obtained for them.

“They told us so, mistress; they told the Negroes so, who were slaves. They preached to us that the king of England had given liberty to all, had paid for their freedom; and they read out of big books, and little books, and Scotch books, that we should put the knives to the throats of the buckras, who then would own it was true. But Roland is dead.”

Joanna shuddered; and Michal, who stood beside her, trying to conceal the tears which obtruded in her eyes as she listened to the tale of the black women, asked very innocently where he had died, and what was become of him.

“Oh! mistress,” replied Wowski, “he died beside a little pool of water among the rocks yonder, and we gave him a handsome funeral. These men were there, and Hamel and master Fillbeer preached over him; and we buried him on the spot where he died—where he breathed his last breath.”

While this dialogue was passing, the Obeah man was in deep consultation with Fairfax, who gave him a written paper, and after another word or two, waved to his companions to depart with him. At the same time he placed in his hands a weighty bag of gold ; and having assured him that an escort of four troopers should attend him by way of safeguard, he bid him for the present farewell.

“ Will you be a friend to these women ?” said the wizard. “ They are innocent : they would have saved this buckra lady, if they had had the power. She knows what they deserve. Farewell ; and may fortune smile on you both for ever !”

The eyes of all the witnesses to this scene had for some time been fixed on the Obeah man, who was about to retire from the presence of his master, and the multitude assembled at Mr Guthrie’s, with a respectful yet rather dignified obeisance ; while those of Fillbeer ogled only the bag which he was to carry off, the bag wherein, as he guessed, were deposited the century of doubloons for which he had himself but vainly sighed. The wizard, as he looked around the circle, encountered and detected the prying glance of the fat man, and halted to make him a particular reverence. He seized the opportunity likewise of addressing a few words, by way of adieu, to all the rest of

the party—Mr Guthrie and the militia, as well as the military officers.

“ Gentlemen,” said he, “ the rebellion is all over. The runaways who fought with the soldiers at the abandoned settlement yesterday, are many of them killed: the rest ran away. Some are gone to the governor; some will be here to surrender to day; and some are gone back to St Domingo, where they were invited to come from, by —— and —— . Your Missionaries have persuaded the Negroes that they are free; and they believe the king’s proclamation, telling them they are still slaves, to be a forgery! It will not be long, therefore, before they rise again; and they will take the country from you, except the king of England, and the governor here, keep these preaching men in better order. What do you want with them? You have a bishop and regular parsons; good men, who tell the Negroes their duty as slaves, and try to keep the poor ignorant things quiet and happy. If you let any other people turn their heads, believe me, they will twist off yours. I declare to my God, I never saw such trumpery. Your king, your governor, and all yourselves (forgive me, gentlemen) are afraid of these white Obeah men. What a fuss is made with them, and what strange nonsense they preach! You all knew Roland—you think so at least; but I can



tell you that he was the basest of mankind, and ten times more wicked than any of you think. Your missionaries are not satisfied with telling the Negroes their duty ; they must preach about freedom, or the Negroes will not come to hear them. Then there are as many sects as preachers, and they hate one another like dog and cat. They will not eat or drink with one another, or speak to one another. The Negroes follow their example ; and you have Methodists, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, Moravians, all pulling at one another. Is this the wisdom of white men ? Pshaw ! you must be cowards to allow it. Had Combah been king here, he should have taught the white men how to treat such turbulent ragga-muffins, I promise you. You remember master C—— who sold his master's books for gin—ha ! ha ! One sheep is much like another. Take my advice : I am an old man ; decide on what you are to do. If you or your king wish to make the Negroes free, do it at once ; say they are free. Your white man's country has room for you all, and land and *nyam-nyam* enough. They are rich, and can pay the planters for their slaves, and houses, and estates, and works ; but if they are not to be free by the law—forbid anybody to deceive them, on pain of death. I would hang or shoot the cunning, sneaking, fawning, fanatical, murderous villain, who tampered with the passions

of my slaves, or dared to hint at such a circumstance as that of master Quashie holding a knife to his master's throat. But you are no worth—(forgive me, gentlemen—I spoke without caution)—I mean you are afraid of the white Obeah men.”

So saying, while his swollen eyeballs seemed to flash with indignation, he repeated his salaam, and hurried away.

Of course Mr Hamel used the dialect of his country, the creole tongue; sufficiently understood by all the assembled party, who occupied the piazza and the apartments adjoining in Mr Guthrie's house, to allow this his farewell to make a considerable impression. Fat Fillbeer yet sat on his horse, amongst the crowd without; and as the Obeah man concluded his speech, he so far forgot himself as to call out—“Bravo!” The expression excited some attention, and a titter was communicated round the circle, which somewhat disconcerted him, as his own conscience was awake to the recollection of some pieces of information with which he had favoured the white Obeah men in England, of whom the wizard had spoken. He had often adverted to the resolutions of the Wesleyans in September 1824; and remembered that the ministers who subscribed to them were censured and recalled by the rest of the society—the *gang* (as he termed them to himself) in England.

He knew what sort of news would be acceptable, and had often made it to suit the occasion. A little pained with these recollections, his eyes encountered suddenly the pretty features of the Quadroon, who saluted him from a distance, and waved to him to come near the window, at which her mistress stood. "A pretty girl," thought Quinbus. "What is your will with me?"

"The veil, the veil," replied the damsel. "You are a brave man, and deserve to have saved my mistress. These women, Patch and Wowski, have told us of your intentions towards us, and how you took the field to fight the runaways."

"And of my wound too," thought Fillbeer, who by this time dismounted from his steed, marched very solemnly up the piazza steps, and delivered the veil into the hands of Joanna, whose kind words and kinder looks consoled him, though in a small degree, for the loss of the doubloons.

Mr Fairfax, who offered him his hand, hoped that all animosity might be laid aside between them, and assured him that he would endeavour to further his interest in the island, if he chose to remain, or render him any services in his power in England, supposing he thought fit to return home.

The fat man accepted his salutation, and thanked him for his offers of assistance, while his eyes unconsciously wandered towards Miss Guthrie,

and his soubrette, the charms of whose person seemed to engage his fixed attention.

“The rose!” said he to himself, and then surveyed his bulk. “This too should have been a queen, and a brave one she had made for the black monarch, or for a white monarch—aye, or for me, were I ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years, younger.” He heaved a sigh as he turned away; a sigh that was echoed by the pretty damsel, whose thoughts were wandering to other scenes and sights than those before her. She was in a cave, and half asleep, and a Mulatto man was on his knee by her side, kissing her hand. She blushed at the recollection, and then she beheld the fair face and the blue eyes of her mistress, cast a glance at Fairfax, and sighed again.

“Ah!” thought she, “I am a poor silly somebody, but I shall see him happy, contented, with his white and beautiful wife.”

She did not observe how many eyes were fixed on her own pretty figure, which had thus been brought into notice by her address to Fillbeer; how many of the soldier buckras were perusing her, as well as the militia officers crowding towards her, as Fillbeer thought, like wasps round the honey-pot. Indeed, no one of the male sex could regard her with indifference, and few of the female sex could ever have surpassed her in personal attractions.

But as her history may perhaps serve a future

opportunity and another pen, it would be premature to say much more of her in these pages.

Her first love, it seems, was to be renounced ; and though this necessary abdication pained her affectionate heart, yet she bore her mortification with firmness and resolution, arising from a due conviction of propriety as to her demeanour and ideas, and a sincere attachment to her mistress. Still we would not have our readers imagine that she had less sensibility than the fair beauties of Great Britain, or even than the darker damsels of Italy or Spain ; or that she was unaffected by any of the little circumstances which constitute the pains and pleasures of lovers—a look—a word—the accidental touch of a beloved person. No : poor Michal was sensible of all this without adverting to it, and to much more which, in the course of time, oppressed her heart and spirits, and caused her to think how often—

“ A sincere and tender passion  
Some cursed planet overrules.”

Such a person, in such a situation, cannot want admirers, such as they are ; and lawless as their views may be, the whole race of Mulatto women, Quadroons, and Mestees, are all equally exposed to them, and generally entertain the same ideas respecting them. The passion of Michal, however, had put her above these ; and the red-coated gentlemen ogled, and nodded, and looked lan-

guishing, enchanted, and enraptured, in vain. She even felt more consideration for fat Fillbeer, of whose valour Patch and Wowski had told rather more than the truth. It is true, that a few of the soldiery had shewn her some little marks of gallantry on the descent from the waterfall; but they were so taken up with the wounded and the dying, that they had but little opportunity of attending to her or her mistress, who returned as she went, first in a litter, and latterly on a mule, as soon as the road became practicable.

Mr Guthrie was exalted to a pitch of something like happiness, notwithstanding all his afflictions, at the recovery of his daughter and the escape of Fairfax; nor could he cease to wonder at that power which he had seen the Obeah man possess and exercise over the minds of his fellow Negroes: a power, as he felt assured, existing as much or more in the ignorance of these, than in the talents of the conjuror, who still was a clever fellow, however, as he allowed, more especially since he had heard his parting speech.

But it is time that we should return to our tale, and relate what little remains to be said of this dabbler in magic, who posted off to his abode with the bag of doubloons, followed shortly afterwards by Mr Fairfax and Mr Guthrie on horseback.

There was a brown woman seated within the little cave which looked on the lagoon, (the same

in which Fairfax had found Michal sleeping,) who advanced at their approach, and presented the features of poor Rachel bathed in tears. She accosted Hamel, and told him that the gaoler, whom Roland had stabbed, was yet living and likely to recover; and she begged to be allowed to visit the tomb of her former master. The Obeah man complied with her request, and led her by sundry tortuous ways to the inner lagoon, where he left her to her meditations, while he exhibited the rest of his dwelling to the two gentlemen who had followed him.

A more extraordinary labyrinth cannot be conceived. In some of the passages were chasms scarce three feet wide, down any of which an unguarded stranger must have fallen, as it were into a bottomless pit, for the Obeah man assured them he had never been able to fathom their depth. Some had water, others breathed only a cool air, which rendered the climate of these recesses even agreeable. In one court was a gulph like the crater of a volcano, where, at the depth of a hundred feet or so, a subterranean river might be heard and seen rushing impetuously into some deeper cavity. We have formerly described some of the apartments in this strange abode, around which the Obeah man had always laboured to weave a net of mystery, by tales of enchantment and prophetic warnings, to keep all intruders from

prying into his secrets; and we need say little more of the rest of them. Provisions of all sorts abounded—weapons, gunpowder, spears, a score of muskets, which had been used of late, and even two small brass cannons, which Hamel confessed he had, many years before, got from a Spanish bark which was wrecked on the coast.

“It is all yours,” said he to Mr Fairfax. “Use it, and defend your property, and your wife that shall be. No Negro, no man but myself, knows the intricacies of this cave at all—nor the very entrances—for there are several; and you see how easily any one may be lost among these windings. I blindfolded the attorney Fillbeer, when I brought him here to bury Roland, who was drawn in through the water in front of the rocks.”

The wizard, in short, laid open to his guests all the natural and artificial contrivances of his dwelling, and, before they quitted it, led them to the gallery by which Roland had first clambered from the banks of the Rio Grande below. Hence they beheld far off at sea a large canoe filled with Negroes, standing away to the eastward.

“My comrades,” said Hamel, “the subjects of king Combah going back to the land of freedom—Haiti—with some of the wretches whom it vomited forth for your destruction, at the recommendation of the Obeah Christians in England.



They will make up a pretty tale, no doubt—but they might have conquered.”

The young gentleman and his Negro exchanged a look of mutual understanding. It meant, on the part of Hamel—“ I have sacrificed everything to serve and prove my gratitude to your father’s son. I want, I deserve, no thanks. I hope I have done my duty.”

On the part of the white man, it signified an acknowledgment that he felt and appreciated all this, and wished to repay him in any and every way.

“ No, no,” said the Negro, returning with them towards the minor lagoon. “ Here is Rachel sobbing for the loss of her worthless master. Let us give her some of the doubloons. It is a slave of yours, Mr Fairfax. Make her free, or let her live unmolested, and await a better fortune than that which she has had torn from her.”

They led her as before, blindfolded, to the outer air, where Samuel, the Duppie, tarried, to accompany the Obeah man upon his last expedition in Jamaica ; namely, to the Turtle Crawl, where had been left concealed a smaller canoe, in case of need, for him or his friends to make sure of their escape from the island.

Mr Fairfax accompanied them, as did Mr Guthrie, led on by curiosity to see the last of this extraordinary man ; having dismissed the afflicted

Rachel to her own abode with half the gold, which Hamel insisted on her taking.

“He did not,” he said, “sell his companions; he did not even betray them. He had tried all fair means to stop the mischief which he knew must be fatal to Mr Fairfax, if not to the whole island; and when all other means failed, the king—Combah—but no matter, he is dead,” continued the wizard, “and the hour of Hamel will shortly arrive!”

“The king was shot,” said Mr Guthrie to himself, turning over in his mind what he recollected of the scene: “his majesty was not struck by the lightning—an ounce bullet gave him his *hic jacet*.”

The Obeah man meanwhile, with the assistance of the Duppie, had launched the canoe from among the mangroves and anchovy trees, and deposited within it his musket, with his ammunition and a basket of provisions, a keg of rum, and a few other articles, about all of which he seemed very indifferent, and but for the officiousness of Samuel would have left behind. He then took leave of his ally, and commended him to Mr Guthrie as an innocent man, who had been forced or seduced by Roland to do all of which he could be called guilty. He was likewise a free man, at least had been sold to be *emancipated*; and as his children were living in this part of the world, he was allowed to remain at Belmont, and received

the remainder of the gold, which Hamel bid him keep.

Mr Fairfax took this opportunity of again soliciting Hamel to remain there also, and pass the evening of his days in peace.

“You have,” said he, “saved my life—saved the daughter of this gentleman! We can never repay you sufficiently.”

“I would not have you repay me,” said the Obeah man. “I have employed your gold as a satisfaction to yourself; but I would have the conviction of having devoted myself, at least, with my companions. I could dwell here no more. I have ruined myself in the estimation of those to whom I had *sworn* fidelity; but I have saved you and her whom you love. Farewell, master!”

“But whither are you bound?” said Mr Guthrie, observing that Hamel had hoisted his sail.

“To the land of my birth—my mother’s country.”

The wind was blowing fresh at north-east; and the wizard, having paddled out of the lee occasioned by the rocks and trees, set his sail, and stretched away to the eastward.

“There were tears in his eyes,” said Mr Guthrie. “What a strange fellow! He is going to deliver himself up to the rebels, whose triumph he has spoiled.”

“Strange, indeed, sir,” replied Fairfax ;—“ but they dare not touch him.”

They rode to the top of the rocks which overhung the sea, whence they could, by the help of a spy-glass, for a long time distinguish the Obeah man sitting in his canoe, in a pensive posture, gazing on the deep blue waves that heaved around him. The wind freshened, and the sky became overcast, yet still they could descry him in the same attitude. They watched him without regarding the time they so misapplied, until his little boat had diminished to a speck. The sun declined ; the twilight sank into darkness ; and although the moon arose in splendour, they saw no more of Hamel or his bark. The Duppie gazed till he was almost blind in reality, and Mr Guthrie gazed in two or three directions at once with no better success ; indeed none of them could assign any reason for gazing at all. Hamel was never heard of more !

THE END.

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